My Reflections

A Collection Of My Christian Articles
Volume 1

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(1 Corinthians 13:12)

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MY REFLECTIONS

By

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Scripture quotations are taken from the HOLY BIBLE, KING JAMES BIBLE

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INTRODUCTION

It is with great gratitude to God Almighty, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost that I present to us my book titled "MY REFLECTIONS." It is a brand new book but with old contents. It is the first volume of the collections of my Christian articles. I hope it blesses you.

It had been a thing of concern to me what will become of my articles should I lose my blog. Not that I expect to lose it, but it has crashed a number of times and my hosting plan expired once without proper notification or reminder. So it has been in my thoughts for a long while now to do something to ensure I don't lose my articles should I experience something worse. I also recently read an unfortunate event that transpired concerning my favourite hymn website, cyberhymnal.org (now hymntime.com), and how the owner lost his website though he now runs a new one. After I read this I decided to take the issue of protecting my articles from being lost seriously. Apart from backing up my blog regularly, the course of action I thought best was to compile them into a book. This would enable me publish it on many websites over the Internet and to have the articles in a well articulated and easily retrievable form in my personal storage. This is the primary reason of compiling this book.

Seeing this is the primary reason for compiling the book I have not done any revision to the original text published. The first of the articles was dated as far back as 2012. Surely between now and then there must be a great difference in the way I see things, in the knowledge I've acquired, and on the views I hold. I didn't bother myself revising the articles to make them conform to my present knowledge. I thought I should do that but the benefit won't be much and therefore won't be worthwhile. The only changes that may occur would probably be in terms of the mode and grammar of presenting my points, but the central truths of the articles, being what is most important, would remain the same. Revising the articles may only make them more wordy and not necessarily more worthy of being read.

I always try to make my cover designs to be such that if carefully studied would inform the observer as precisely as possible of the content of the book. I chose the title, "My Reflections," because reflection means, "thought or consideration," and the articles are a product of my thoughts and considerations on the words of

God and his revelations to me. By reflection I also meant it in the more common sense which is "an image of something seen on a reflective surface, e.g. a glass, water, etc." The cross on the cover depicts the truths I wish to present, but you can see that the reflection of the cross is not the exact representation of the actual. But it is not too far all the same. By seeing the reflection one could have a good idea of what the actual is. So my words are not the perfect representations of the truths I wish to present, but they are not far from the perfect all the same. By it we shall be able to have a good idea of the actual and perfect image so much that we can't mistake it for something else.

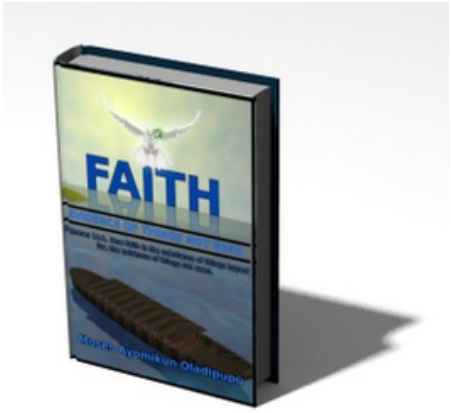
My key text for the book tells us that this manner of presenting spiritual truth is common to all, for it says, "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." (1 Corinthians 13:12). So our knowledge of the truth at its best are mere reflections of the actual, and in that he says "darkly," it means we only see spiritual things vaguely and not precisely. We only see in part and know in part. But a time is coming that we shall no longer see mere reflections but the actual truths themselves, we shall see and know not merely in part but perfectly. We, at this time of imperfection, ought to be content with these reflections here and there, provided that what they reflect are actual truths not heresies. In this present time I believe that only the word of God is the perfect truth. Seeing that my articles come very short off the actual truths I wish to present, let the reader compare carefully those things he/she reads with the perfect truth (The Holy Bible).

I believe that despite this it is a useful book of good reflections nevertheless, I therefore recommend it still to the reader. I pray that as you read it it blesses and edifies you. Thank you and God bless you. Amen.

Ayomikun

WHAT IS FAITH?

Posted on August 16, 2012, this article was an excerpt from my first book titled "FAITH: The Evidence Of Things Not Seen." Though it was not intended at the time I wrote it, I think it has in it a good answer to the propounders of the rather daft and more recent argument that Christianity is not a religion. The full eBook is available for free HERE.



Faith, belief and religion can be used interchangeably, though belief and religion vary a little one from the other but faith encompasses them both. To understand faith fully we have to look at it in the light of the other words, i.e. ‘religion’ and ‘belief.’
Belief means firm opinion or acceptance. Religion exceeds the opinion or acceptance to involve the practices based on the opinion or acceptance. Though at-times people do observe practices without having any belief in what they practice. So religious practice does not necessarily indicate belief. Therefore belief and religion do vary since one can exist without the other.

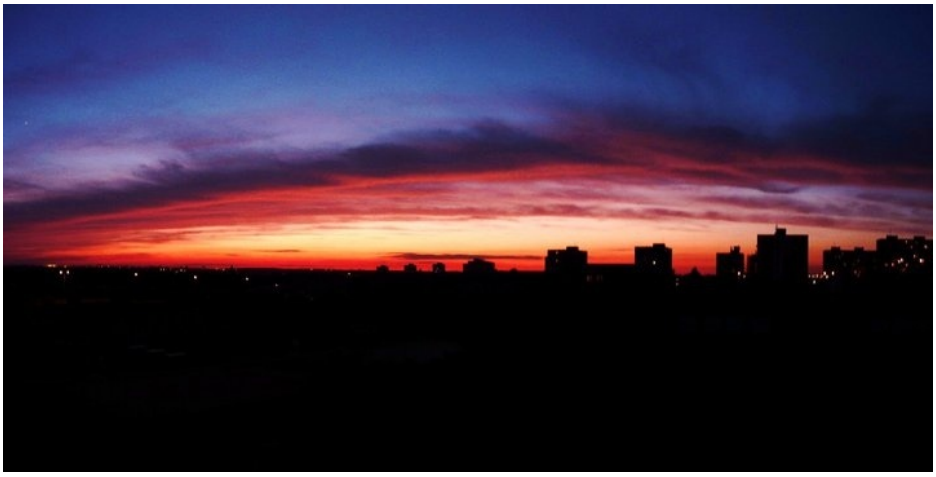
Faith by the dictionary definition means a strong belief or complete trust in someone or something. Some dictionary adds “without a proof or evidence” to their definition of faith. But this will only be true if we still consider facts as proof or evidence of the unseen. Faith, though it may not have a facts as proof or evidence, it is nevertheless an evidence in itself.

Faith also means religion, this is why we can say the Christian faith to mean the Christian religion, and the Buddhist Faith to mean the Buddhist religion. When I refer to faith I am not referring to any useless faith. James 2:20 says “Faith

without works is dead.” So it’s quite completely correct to say faith encompass religion and belief. At least meaningful faith does.

THE DOLEFUL SUNDOWN

Posted on September 5, 2013, this article was written to lament the sleepiness of the church in the present time. It was later included as a seperate chapter in my book titled, "THE LIGHT AND THE SHINING LIGHT." The full eBook is available for free HERE.



At six am, Adam and Eve were created. Before seven they sinned and fell short of the glory of God. By eight God called Abram and changed his name to Abraham. By nine, God gave the Law to Israel through Moses. By ten, Israel got tired of having God as their King and wanted a man to be king over them in the place of God. Their excuse was that they were giving heed to a popular demand. At five after ten, the greatest King of all time reigned in Israel in the person of David. So perfect in the sight of God was he that God made him a promise. At eleven Israel sinned and were taken into captivity. At twelve Christ was born to bring man the whole way back to God. He it was that established the Church. From that time on was all about the Bible, the persecutions, and thanksgiving. At

two pm, was the reformation championed by the likes of Martin Luther. At three pm, the King James Version was successfully translated into English and was appointed to be read in the churches by King James, the English King. At four pm, J.S. Bach's Cathedral was built as modern day music theory was given birth to in the church. At five, the puritans ran off to America.

Time is gone and now is the doleful sundown. The day is far spent and the eyes of the church is now heavy, yet the Lord has never ever stopped saying "watch!" How can one watch when he has become drowsy. The church is in a sorry state of backsliding and compromise.

My mentor, Pastor A.W. Tozer, made me to understand that entertainment in the church is as evil as bid counting practiced by the Catholics. But that is the order of the day now. A church service is not blessed unless you have been entertained by some entertaining oratory sermon, good beat from the music band, and it hurts me to include, being entertained by the silly jokes of comedians. All these have become a part of the church. I once sat in a congregation where young people were talking about what would be good for the young people's church. They said many things like dancing, choreography, movies, drama, etc, but none mentioned the preaching of the word, or studying of the Bible. All is entertainment now. A father would chide his son for not being spiritual and would be satisfied when his son starts enjoying Christian rock, or Hip-praise (which I think should be called gangster-praise). Not that to praise God with music (good music) is carnal but in this doleful time of sundown when the eyes of the church is now heavy, entertainment and enjoyment is spirituality.

Hymns which the Bible expressly commands us to sing is now boring (Ephesians 5:19) . When a man raises up his hand to sing a hymn, people just say "you are boring." But this is due to the entertainment malady. There is no rhythm to nod their head to. There is no drugster shouting to thrill them. Neither is their any drummer to beat his drum for them to shake their buttocks and sweat. For the absence of these it is not worth while listening to it. It doesn't matter anymore whether the hymn says "Praise to the Lord the Almighty the King of creation," no, it doesn't. Because that praise does not entertain them they don't get thrilled and if they don't get thrilled then what is the point. This is because we have more hypocrites than there are spiritual people. They already despise the church and her ways and they are on the verge of puking. To restrain

themselves and to avoid being seen as carnally minded people, they do spiritual things in a worldly way. They have no reason to be amidst us. Hypocrites!

One 'Christian', when he heard me listening to a hymn he said "put off that thing and put on music." I shouldn't have had any problem with that but this one too claims to be a Christian. And this Christian would listen to a music as meaningless if not as diabolical as "Lost in Paradise" and sing along with all the might. The church is fast forgetting the sweetness of hymns and heavenly melodies and are turning aside to meaningless crash and bang music. To you who love to listen to Christian reggae, Christian jazz, Christian rock, gangster praise, and traditional hand clapping songs so as to forget your hymnbooks, my question is this, did Jesus sing? If yes what did he sing? Read Matthew 26:30 and Mark 14:26.

The world has always been fund of doing things with a defeated purpose. And now the church is imitating them. Sometimes you find them worshiping a god that can't save them, or practicing morals that can't justify them. James said in his epistle "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." (James 1:27). But what spot of the world can we not find in the church today? The church is now worldly and are doing things with defeated purposes too. The defeated pattern of dressing has crept into the church. Christians will wear trousers, only to sag their boxers out. Christian ladies will wear skirt, but only wear those so short they dare not sit opposite you else you find yourself in hell. Christians would put on clothes and still look naked. Defeated, I must say, completely defeated.

The madness of the present times is evident in the fact that people do things based on excuses rather than reason. In his poem called "The Vision of William," William Langland described conscience to say "Unless Reason advise me, rather will I die." Today however people hoping to live lives devoid of reason hope to sustain their conscience with excuses supposing that excuses were a good substitute to reason. Despite the craftiness of excuses, the conscience still dies all the same. Yes excuses has an effect, surely it does, but it has none other effect than to lay the conscience quietly and peacefully in the grave so that you don't know it's dead. I have sat down quite a number of times at a church meeting listening to or participating in a conversation during which the issue of dressing

would come up and somebody will argue that dressing were not an issue and that what we put on doesn't matter. Such a person will say there is no problem for women to put on trousers bringing up some really ridiculous explanation of cultures he knows nothing about to defend his stance. The same person would put an idolatrous earring in the ears of his girl child and say "I can't do without putting an earring in my girl child's ear lest people mistake her for a boy." Hearing this alone you'll think that such a person really cares about having a distinct difference in the appearance of the different genders, but it is the same person who said that it were okay for women to put on trousers. If reason were really responsible for his utterances, he'll throw the earrings away and would rather not allow his girl child put on trousers "lest people mistake her for a boy." All these are excuses and not reasons. Excuses rule the mind of the people of this generation and so there is a large crowd of religious people amidst true Christians who are going about with a dead conscience.

Many practices of the modern day church are just out of sheer disobedience to the Bible. Women worshiping with uncovered hair, women being allowed to speak in the gathering of saints, Christians swearing to oath as if it were not their Lord who spoke condemning it. And many other things the Bible has not commanded us that is practiced freely amidst us. So backsliden is the church that as the world is suffering from a severe moral crisis in which homosexuality, abortion, etc is being legalised in some parts of the world, the church is nothing to appeal to. It were more hopeful to appeal to traditions and cultures of men than to hope on the church. The reason for this were explained in my article titled "THE VERY FUNNY ALLEGORY ABOUT THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH." It can be found on my blog @ ayo32ola3.wordpress.com. These are really sad truths to admit but it were good to point them out so that we can weep and groan for the level of backsliding we have found ourselves in and maybe God will revive us again.

In this doleful sundown, we see from the world that they call this the age of enlightenment. Really? Well, welcome to the age where human right is the insanity of same sex marriage, Christianity is prosperity, service to God is bloodshed and oppression, education is void of morals, and money is god. Under the gross darkness of this sombre skies, ask the average man what he thinks and though his eyes were open and his specs on, he'll still say "this is the age of enlightenment." But asking Jesus what he thinks, this is what he says "If

therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" (Matthew 6:23). Therefore this is the age of great darkness.

This is the doleful sundown. The time is far spent and the eyes of the church is heavy but the command of our Lord remains the same "watch!" This is the time to pray, this is the time to watch, this is the time to turn our laughter to mourning, this is the time to humble our selves before the Lord, this is the time to wake, shake ourselves and return to the right practices and marry our beloved Bibles.

May God help us to make the right decisions and so shall our walk be close to God. Calm and serene shall be our path and the blessed light of our Lord shall flood the way that leads us to God. Amen.

Excerpts from the book: The Light And The Shinning Light

WAIT UPON THE LORD

Posted on September 11, 2013, this article talks about waiting upon God. The aim was to inform young Christians that Christian maturity does not come instantly but they must wait upon God to work in them and make them grow in him.

The hymn writer William F. Lloyd starts one of his beautiful hymns with these words "wait my soul upon the Lord". That's a great plea to one's soul - key to any Christian that must succeed in the Christian race.

The Bible uses the word "wait" exactly one hundred and one times and that is quite a significant number. When one says that he has repeated a thing a hundred and one times, we know what that means. It means that he has repeated it uncountable times. And the word of God says "wait" a hundred and one times which emphasises the importance of patience. We can never be too patient in waiting. When we have been patient and we think it's enough, we still haven't waited enough so long as God hasn't done that which he has promised to do.

This does not mean that our God is a God that keeps promising and when it is time (especially one set by us) for him to fulfil his promise, he simply gives us an excuse and says "wait" again. No! It isn't so! The call to wait is only to enable

us to move with the perfect pace and timing of the Most High. If you move too fast, you will leave your guide behind. If you leave your guide, you will miss your way. When he says wait, he wants you to be safe from the dangers ahead till he has put it all out of the way.

When the traffic light says wait and you say "my journey is still far, I can't wait," and so refuse to wait, how far will you get? So is the call of God thus "wait so you can go far"

When a cake in the oven feels it is sweet enough and jumps out of the oven even when the baker knows it is not the right time, all that will result from that is a half baked cake. So also when God tells us to wait, it is to make us better and believe me, when we wait according to God's command we can't be burnt. Our waiting will only be a wing with which we soar deeper into his heart and the iron shoes to keep us going on the road that leads to perfection.

Remember what it says in Habakkuk 2:3 "For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." Everything must happen in its appointed time. For this reason let certainty make us strong in joyful patience and endurance.

Our hymn writer, William F. Lloyd, ends each of the verses of this his hymn with this promise from God "As thy days, thy strength shall be." God made this promise in Deuteronomy 33:25 to those blessed of the Lord. Christ has told us of what we should possess if we are to be blessed in his Sermon on the Mount found in Matthew 5:3-12. There are several other portions of scriptures that speaks of being blessed or how to be blessed and I needn't quote them. This promise if for all that are blessed of God: "As thy days, thy strength shall be."

If your strength is little today, it shall increase with every passing day. By tomorrow, you shall be stronger, and it increases everyday until you are now of great strength. So wait upon the Lord, for in this there is great reward.

Photo by M.Angel Herrero via Flickr

THE FIVE STAR SERMON TO THE FISHES

Posted on January 21, 2014, this article speaks on true forgiveness. A forgiveness that is not based on forgetting. A forgiveness that causes no hurt even when one remembers clearly the ill that was done to him/her.

Speaker: Sir. Fisher
Topic: Forgive and Forget
Venue: River Bank
Attendees: Empty headed fishes

Forgive and forget is a popular saying among the ignorant. It shouldn't be preached to men but to fishes in the water from the river bank. They'd love such a sermon because it exalts the ability of their little brains to retain almost nothing. They'd be the paragon of forgiveness and the praise of the world if this saying were true. For they forget everything they see as soon as they stop seeing it. They lay eggs, forgive, and forget and start feeding on them. They see your bate today and it harms them, but if after they escape and see it again later today they would have completely forgiven and forgotten and will put your bate in their mouth again like a toffee. How such became so famous only speaks of how little people read the Bible and and how much they give heed to fables and unprofitable talks.

However there is no where in the Bible that one would see it written forgive and forget, nowhere was it implied. What Christ taught us is not forgive and forget but forgive in sincerity. If our forgiveness is not complete to the extent that even though we remember the evil done to us, we yet forgive in sincerity so much that rather than hate, love flows from the heart for such a person, then we haven't forgiven. This is what Christ says. Not forgive and forget, not forgive alone, but in essence "...from your hearts forgive... every one his brother their trespasses." (Matthew 18:35).

If we find any who would say something like "forgive and forget" or "the Bible says forgive and forget" let's politely correct them.

Forgiveness is not a ticket to heaven but its absence is a barrier from entering in. Forgive, today, everybody that has offended you including me if I have offended you too. PLEEEEEASE! Thanks.

FEARFULLY AND WONDERFULLY MADE

Posted on June 24, 2014, this article talks about what it means in truth to be fearfully and wonderfully made. In it I try to refute the interpretation ladies try to give it that it refers to them being attractive.

"For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well."

(Psalm 139:13 - 14)

There are many things that baffle me about the mindset of the Christians of our time and I do not hesitate to express them. One of such is what people think being fearfully and wonderfully made means. Some actually think it speaks of the physical.

I understand that many assume that this scripture refers to being physical appealing with some even rephrasing it as "...fearfully, wonderfully, and beautifully made." It is thus evident that many agree that being physically attractive is what the Bible speaks about here. But it is not having a blemishless face, or round cheeks that means a person is fearfully and wonderfully made. No, nothing physical.

The most acceptable attribution of these verses to the physical is that we are fearfully and wonderfully made for the fact that our frame is so complex and the

organs of our system coexists in perfect order serving their purpose in the most profound manner. This is true to some extent with this.

It is true to a full extent that a person is fearfully and wonderfully made WHEN and only WHEN God hast possessed his reins. The psalmist did not say we are fearfully and wonderfully made speaking of mankind as a whole but spoke of himself alone. Neither did he say he was fearfully and wonderfully made until he had said "thou hast possessed my reins." So everything we read here revolves round this fact that God has possessed his reins. It is when God possesses one's reins that he is fearfully and wonderfully made.

What does it mean for God to possess one's reins? The reins is the instrument used for controlling a horse. You don't need to carry a horse on your head to make it move from place to place, you just lay hold of the reins and you are in control. The horse obeys you absolutely without objection. You can ride the horse right into the river, off the cliff, and all the way unto its death. It will go with you and not object. Until God possesses you to this extent you cannot be said to be wonderfully and fearfully made.

Why? "But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour." (2 Timothy 2:20). Not everything is wonderfully made because some are made for dishonour. Those who are fearfully and wonderfully made unto honour are those who God has possessed their every thought. God is now he who guides their steps in life. The world is out completely sidelined and cannot at all influence their decision. God alone reigns on the throne of their heart.

Therefore when we look at Peter, Paul, James, John Wycliffe, John Owens, or Martin Luther, Frances Rudley Hevergal, we see people wonderfully and fearfully made. It has nothing to do with their appearance but their being possessed by God. God owns and directs them. This is what makes them wonderfully made. Where does this leave all the fashion models and actors and actresses? Vessels unto dishonour, even if they appeal so much to the eye. If any is wonderfully and fearfully made it is always not because of their Physical appearance.

This man whose reins was possessed by God, in the latter part of the Psalm said

"Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies." (Psalm 139:21 - 22). Being fearfully and wonderfully made, the psalmist is affectionately fixed to God. Seeing the glory of being and wonderfully made he seeks to be more and more wonderfully and fearfully made and ends the Psalm saying "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." (Psalm 139:23 - 24). How shall God make him more wonderfully and fearfully made and lead him in the way everlasting if it were not by possessing the reins. In seeking greater glory and excellence in God, the psalmist didn't say make me more physically attractive. No, he only said "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Dear brothers and very dear sisters let this be our craving and not things that appeal to the flesh.

Never ever forget that being wonderfully and fearfully made is having the reins possessed by God. The question is: "are you wonderfully and fearfully made?" It is a personal question that needs not to be rashly answered. Soberly and thoughtful consider if God has possessed your reins. If not go before him now and ask him to possess your reins.

Prayer:*Dear Lord, I seek to be fearfully and wonderfully made, a vessel unto honour in thine house. Possess my reins from now henceforth and even till my dying moment. Amen.*

Header photo courtesy: *www.stanthonyretreat.org*

THE VERY FUNNY ALLEGORY ABOUT THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Posted on August 26, 2014, this article was written to explain what the church is losing by accepting seemingly harmless traditions of the world and how it is making us powerless in rebuking the evils in the world around us. The audio is also available in MP3, OGG, M3U formats. If your device is connected to the internet tap your preferred format to listen.

"A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

(Galatians 5:9)

I once heard a very funny story that goes:

One day, a man borrowed a fry pan to fry something, let's say chips. He hurriedly used it, washed it, and returned it to the owner immediately without any delay. When he returned it he put a very little insignificant looking dish in the fry pan. The owner of the fry pan asked "what is this for?" His response was "The dish? O, as I was using your fry pan it gave birth so I thought I should return it with its child." Seeing it as an expression of appreciation, the owner said "O, thanks a lot." Saying this he took both the fry pan and the dish.

After a while the borrower came again and borrowed the fry pan. This time he didn't return it early, in fact he didn't return it at all. When the owner was anticipating the return of his fry pan, he waited for five full months and as the fry pan was not returned, he lost his patience. He went to the borrower and angrily demanded for his fry pan but the borrower said "what fry pan?" "The one you borrowed from me the other day, have you forgotten?" retorted the owner. "O, that fry pan! I had forgotten. You see, as I was using the fry pan, it died."

This little looking issue resulted in a very big quarrel that was so hard to settle though the whole village where it happened got involved. Why? The owner accepted the profit of the stupid fable and now it was time to bear the loss of it he became angry and started to appeal to reason that such a thing couldn't have occurred. If he knew this, then why did he accept the dish? Though he was right in his stance against the stupid fable, his acceptance of the insignificant looking dish made it a bit tricky to settle the dispute. This is a very funny story, and I haven't stopped laughing since I heard it. Funny, but it explains the unholy romance of the church with the world most acutely.

The traditions and ways of life of the world were pressing the church to accept them, the church resisted for a while and later saw it as harmless to compromise her stance. Women never wore trousers keeping to the commandment "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman’s garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God." (Deuteronomy 22:5). An abomination is what the Bible declares any woman who puts on trousers and any man who dresses like a female, for example wearing of kilts by men, to be. The church had snubbed this commandment in recent years, shunning reason, scriptures, human dignity, instructions, and the way of life of the saints in bygone years. It meant nothing to us for the church judged by sight and not righteous judgment (John 7:24) not minding that God had declared that any body who acts this way is an abomination to him.

Now the world is also demanding homosexuality and everybody is crying "ABOMINATION!" because the Bible says "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination." (Leviticus 18:22). Like the evil in dressing like the opposite sex this too is to God an abomination. If in the appeal for women to dress like men and men like women we snubbed the injunction that

says such is an abomination, why appeal to it now? We snubbed reason, scriptures, human dignity, instructions, and the way of life of the saints in bygone years, and now we wish to appeal to them. Why the double standards? The church by virtue of her acceptance of things contrary to scriptures do not have a good stand point to withstand the evil of the present times. If we must be able to resist this evil as Christians and as a church we must shun and reject all unbiblical ways of life and mode of dressing which includes:

- Wearing of trousers by women and wearing of feminine dresses by men or unisex clothes by both
- Not covering of the hair by women during worship/prayer or in church or covering of the head by men, wether it is the skull cap of the pope or the hat of a cowboy, for the Lord says "my house shall be called a house of prayer."
- All forms of artificiality whether it be make up, artificial hair, artificial nails, or jewelries, which are an expression of ingratitude to God.
- Women speaking or even asking questions in church.
  And any other thing contrary to scriptures. Let us make a concerted effort in this regard to find out things that may displease God and amend our ways.

If we don't act on this things, all our protest against homosexuality or abortion, or anything else will be as meaningless as the cry of a fowl laying egg. We don't stand a chance against the evil of the present time if we don't amend our ways immediately while it's still funny. Remember "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." (Galatians 5:9).

May the good Lord help us to live lives pleasing to him and to be good soldiers for him, denying ourselves of anything that will have a negative effect on our warfare. Amen.

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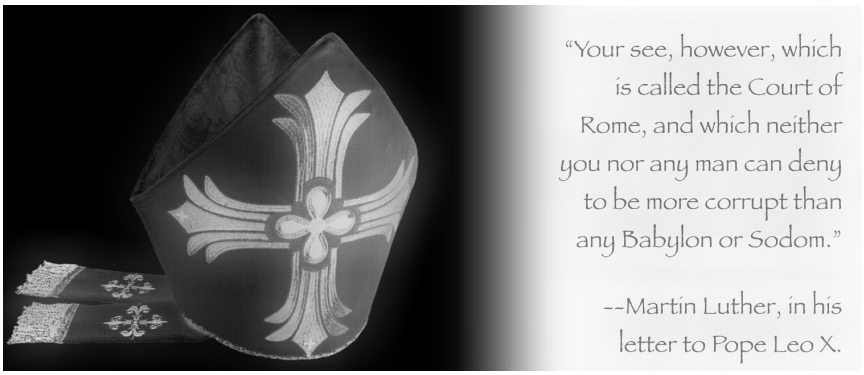
SOME APT ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS WITH CATHOLIC BEARING

Posted on December 17, 2014, this article are collections of answers given against questions with Roman Catholic bearing. Answers against things such as transubstantiation, sovereignty of the Pope, etc.


"Your see, however, which is called the Court of Rome, and which neither you nor any man can deny to be more corrupt than any Babylon or Sodom."
--Martin Luther, in his letter to Pope Leo X.

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils."

(1 Timothy 4:1)

Vicariousity Of The Clergy

See how unlike Christ was to His successors, though all will have it that they are His vicars. I fear that in truth very many of them have been in too serious a sense His vicars, for a vicar represents a prince who is absent. Now if a pontiff rules while Christ is absent and does not dwell in his heart, what else is he but a vicar of Christ? And then what is that Church but a multitude without Christ? What indeed is such a vicar but antichrist and an idol? How much more rightly did the Apostles speak, who call themselves servants of a present Christ, not the vicars of an absent one!
Martin Luther the reformer (1483-1546)

Absolute Sovereignty Of The King And Pope

“Every Christian holds 'dominion' of God, and the final, irreversible appeal is,

therefore, to the court, not of Rome, but of Heaven.”
John Wycliffe (before 1330-1384).

Transubstantiation

Against the doctrine transubstantiation a matyr before his death said "when Christ sat at supper with the disciples He had not His body in His hand to distribute." and he said, moreover, "that if every host being consecrated at the altar were the Lord's body, then there be twenty thousand Gods in England."
If in the sacrament a priest made bread into God, he made a God that can be eaten by rats and mice.
Thomas Bagley (before 1430 – 1431)

The Wealth And Lordship Of The Clergy

Archbishop Arundel: We must believe what the holy church of Rome teaches.
Lord Cobham: I could not believe in what was opposite to Scripture!
Concerning the popish church and the Pope, Cobham denounces the wealth of the church to Archbishop Arundel as venom (1413).
Archbishop Arundel: What do you mean by venom?
Lord Cobham: Your possessions and lordships.

Bowing To The Cross

Dominican friar: Sir, will you worship the cross of Christ that He died upon?
Lord Cobham: Where is it?
Dominican friar: I put you the case, sir, that it were here, even now before you.
Lord Cobham: A wise man, to put me an earnest question of a thing, yet he himself knoweth not where the thing itself is!
[Lord Cobham was cruelly burnt alive shortly after his conversation with Archbishop Arundel]

Confession To Priests

When asked whether she confessed her sins to a priest, Margery Baxter the Lollard replied she had never offended any priest.

WALKING WITH GOD

Posted on January 3, 2015, this article is about walking with God and taking life as he orders it, and not being in a hurry in life.

"He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

(Micah 6:8)

I remember attending an Easter retreat in which a song was sung by a choir and I fell in love with the song. Not just for the melody but most especially for the wordings. I can't remember the exact wordings but it went something like this:

"Walk with the Lord,
It means to journey with him,
Walk in his words...
If you really want to get to heaven
just walk walk walk with the Lord."

That sums up the importance of walking with God. If you want to get to heaven just walk with him. You won't miss heaven if you do so. We look at life as something in which you need to do so much to have a bright hope for eternity but the man of God says "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:8) summing all of God's demands to just three. To experience the manifest presence of God, we must walk with him.

Walking with God is living one's life with full consciousness of him. You can't say you are walking with someone if you are not conscious of him. He'll turn this way and you'll go straight. If you walk with somebody you must be conscious of the person's movements and know where he is going to next. To know this may mean you are just watching him and following him, or you know what influences his decisions for example you know he is going to the restaurant just by the bend therefore you know he'll take the right at the next junction. So, walking with God is being sensitive to God's injunctions and being close to his heart. A little loss of concentration and he may be out of sight. "I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave

me no answer." (Song of Solomon 5:6). Therefore I suppose the best and most essential occupation of a person willing to live a good life and be victorious in death is walking with God.

Agreeing With God

"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"

(Amos 3:3)

Of necessity, to walk with somebody, you must be agreed together. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3), therefore walking with God is living ones life in agreement with God. But does God wishes to agree with us? Does the maker of the universe have time for you and for me?

"Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken... Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isaiah 1:2, 18). God seeks that we should agree with him. He wants us to make his priorities our priorities, he wants us to have desires that are in consonance with his'. He wants us to be in every way, be it thought, words, and conducts, like him. To walk with God, we must be agreed with him. To be agreed with him is to fashion our lives after his own pattern. His pattern is that which is revealed in his word. His word is that which we have, The Holy Bible.

Benefits Of Living A God Guided Life

"Nevertheless I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."

(Psalm 73:23 - 24)

Many times, people try to know what their purpose in life is. This curiosity to know the future mixed with the fear of not living a purposeful life if the future is not known sees a lot of people reading horoscopes, and consulting magicians,

psychics, star gazers etc. Such makes me laugh. I am sorry but I laugh at things I shouldn't laugh at at times for this is pitiful thing. No one can live a purposeful life with these. When I was very young and used to have interest in horoscope, it never said anything specific that happened after I read it, perhaps because we were Christians and such demonic manipulations that make these look true could not work. But I knew one person who at least once had the horoscope narrate everything that would happen to him the next day and at the close of the day everything happened just exactly. Quite amazing. But all that this horoscope ever said was about a girl friend and girlfriend and a girlfriend. Today however, he is married to not that girlfriend but to someone entirely different. How purposeful is that?

Living a purposeful life can't be achieved by knowing the future but by walking with God. Like that song I heard that goes "walk with the Lord, it means to journey with, walk/trust in his word,... If you really want to get to heaven just walk walk walk with the Lord." There in, dear friends lies the answer, "walk with the Lord." Younger people will often ask "how do I know God's purpose for me?" But must we know what our purpose is before we can live it? No. All we need to do is to walk with God and everything else will sort out itself. When you walk with God, in the long run, you'd look back at your life and be glad at how purposeful everything has been. Trying to know what tomorrow holds is often a sign of distrust in God. We can't be sure that he will fulfil something great in our lives, so we want to know what is going to happen in future so that if it is not good, we can seek to avoid it. Now, how can a loving God not have a good purpose for us? Sometimes it is a sign of anxiousness but let us not allow this be part of us. Christ said "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." (Matthew 6:34). Christ here talked about trusting God and called those who didn't "ye of little faith." We needn't know tomorrow, in fact we shouldn't care about it so much but we need to walk with him who holds tomorrow in absolute trust.

Setting A Straight Road For The Lame Feet

"And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed."

(Hebrews 12:13)

One of the biggest weaknesses of man is his tendency of always thinking he is stronger than he truly is. If I talk about the weak, perhaps, ninety nine percent will assume they didn't fit in that description. But we are told here that we should set straight paths for our feet. I suppose that this straight path which we should set for ourselves includes and is not limited to setting a specific amount of time we must pray to God in a day and stick dutifully to it. Perhaps we may set it as a duty to pray a minimum of one hour everyday and set it as a duty to read at least two chapters of the Bible systematically. Setting a goal for ourselves is very essential especially in our weak state. That is why it says "lest that which is lame be turned out of the way." When do such, that which is lame will be healed, and we'll become strong where we once were weak.

A man who is a thorough pray-er who's feet is not lame may not need to set such goals for he'll be in the habit of exceeding it. If we were men like those who once they are on their knees in prayers would not be aware when they have spent four hours in God's presence, we won't need so much of setting of goals. But when we are weak and in the habit of dozing off while praying or we just pray a little and not feel like continuing, we ought to set our goals to what will profit us. If we don't do that and assume we could just pray as the spirit leads, we would see ourselves, by slow degrees, stop praying. We should make it a habit of singing several hymns daily and learning new ones as often as we can. If we can't read sufficient amount of the Bible to edify us daily, we ought to set goals too, else we would also stop reading the Bible. In this state we could assume that that which was lame is turned out of the way. So in our walk with God let us not think we are so strong but be cautious enough not to allow ourselves turn away from God due to negligence. May God help us. Amen.

Cover Photo From: goforwardwithfaith.blogspot.in

BRING BACK OUR WOMEN

Posted on February 3, 2015, this article was written to try to make us see that women should not pursue money at the expense of their homes.

Wise king Solomon described a harlot this way; "her feet abide not in her house: Now is she without, now in the streets..." (Proverbs 7:10-12). But what has feminism turned our women into? Noooo! Nooo, don't get me wrong, feminism didn't turn them to harlots, but it turned many to be in every way in the similitude of an harlot. Get out of your house very early and you'll see cute ladies and elderly ones skipping to work (now without, now in the streets). Why are they not at home? MONEY! Why do people become harlots? MONEY! A good home has no priority in the mind of an harlot, so does a good home has no priority in mind of much of the women in our doleful times. Money is good, but a good and healthy home is better.

So, if you are a woman, earning money is good, but have your priorities set right. Having right priorities would certainly mean you'd make sacrifices. Remember, God's institution for raising up children remains the home and not the nursery.

Photos Derived From:

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WHO'D BE THE LORD'S ACE IN THIS ULTRA MODERN AGE?

Posted on July 13, 2015, this article is aimed at spurring people to boldly rise up to the challenges of the present times. Men who did great things in the past never knew at the start the great things they would achieve. The article was featured in Teens Magazine of Assemblies of God, Abuja, Area 11 with the title, "The Lord's Battle Axe," and for the featured image was this fierce armoured tank. I didn't like that title and image for my article though but I was glad it featured in the magazine.

"And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none."

(Ezekiel 22:30)

Where the church goes to sleep, and compromise and backslidings creep in in every sphere of human existence, the Lord always brings about great awakenings with his aces. Would you be the Lord's ace of this ultra modern age?

Philip Melancthon (1497-1560) wrote “The Pope, for the space of these certain hundred years, hath been held for the principal Head of all Christendom. When he did but wink or hold up one finger, so must the Emperors, Kings, and Princes have humbled themselves and feared; insomuch that he was Lord of all Lords, King of all Kings on earth; yea, he was an earthly god. But now comes Almighty God, throws down the Pope, and wins that great king with the ace (Luther), and there he lies. This is God’s government, as Mary sings in her Magnificat: Deposuit potentes—He puts down the mighty from their seat, etc...

“...At last comes our Lord God, divides the game, beats the Pope with Luther (he

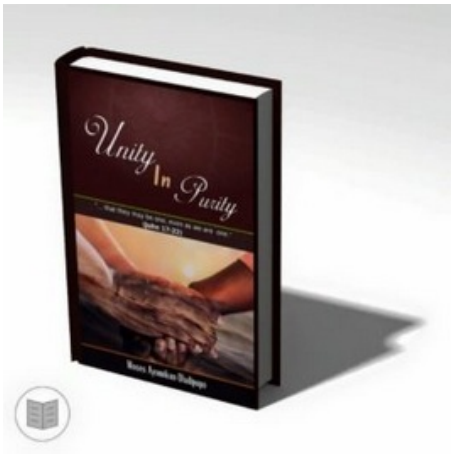
is the ace). But the Pope is not yet quite dead; Christ hath begun to slay him with the spirit of his mouth, so that he is dead in the hearts of believing Christians. I hope it is almost come so far that, in less than two hundred years, God will quite make an end of him, and of that antichristian idolatry, by his glorious coming."

Malenchton hoped that the Lord's glorious coming to be less than two hundred years from when he wrote these words and he expected that that would make an end of the antichristian idolatry, however it's almost five hundred years now from the death of Malenchton and Christ hasn't come yet. There are still many anti Christian idolatry under whose weight the world is reeling. Therefore the game continues and more aces are needed. God is looking for a man. The question however is, would he find you?

In that day when you shall see the need to be an ace, remember the place of prayer, fasting, humility, and solitude with God in study and contemplations. In adversities you should show yourself like a man, and show a good spirit. Your whole life should be manly; you should fear God alone and put your trust in him. Never be dejected, but believe and pray. Have a faith with the seal of works. Aim at heavenly honours and disregard earthly contempt. Take up your cross and embrace its loses with joy. For God would not make an ace of him who does not prepare himself. There is a dire need for a great awakening. Be at the forefront of the Lord's army. Through sacrifice, service, devotion to God, and nonconformity to the world, you too could be another ace in this history lane. We await your rising.

THE COUNCIL OF ELDERS

Posted on December 3, 2015, this article is a chapter from my book "Unity In Purity." In it I tried to talk about how the church ought to handle heresies. The full book is available for download for free HERE.



"And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question."

(Acts 15:1-2)

When I spoke on the division of the church, I spoke only on things peculiar to our time. But one factor that will prove divisive regardless of age, era, and time in history, is that of doctrinal differences based on disputable issues. This has always been so as we can see in the text above, from the earliest church, and it

will always be as we are assured in scriptures where it says, "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." (1 Corinthians 11:19). So this must happen for our good. God allows it so as to streamline our leadership. The folly however of this present times is nobody cares about checkmating heresies. For most people hold to their faith without convictions, and are afraid of being proved wrong in what they hold to be true. Therefore, to be on the safe side, they keep quiet and refuse to challenge these things. But it was not so with the apostles. Imagine if Paul and Barnabas had allowed these teachers of circumcision to continue to teach these things for fear of being proved wrong, they'd have allowed this people to drive a lot of believers from the faith. But they stood their ground and disputed with these people. So also must we do in this our time without dividing the church.

To make sure that heresy does not spread, it is important that we keep watch for any strange doctrine or any other thing that seem to be a disputable issue, and if we, as individuals or as a church, discover any, we are to meet to discourse the issue prayerfully, and come to a conclusion based on scriptures. This is where the council of elders come in. Elders of all concerned regions are to meet and discourse the issue, and anything they conclude is to be accepted so far it has a scriptural backing. (By saying region, I do not mean that there decision is binding only on that region. But where they come to a conclusion, they should communicate everything about the meeting to the global church. The global church will approve of it, if it is in truth gotten by the leading of the Holy Ghost. All other regions of the world should take a cue from what they observe and adopt it when they observe it is scriptural. If any region object, their objections should be given a proper hearing. Remember, we all must be of one mind. We are one body. What affects the one affects the whole).

When the conclusion of elders has no scriptural backing so much that the men who claim to be elders only handled the issue based on popular idea or for their personal benefit, interest, or profit, let they who know the truth dispute it again bringing to bare where it contradicts scriptures. Let him or them not be afraid of the decision of the elders but oppose them with the scriptures.

We don't have many elders now, and much of the people who claim to be elders are in no way elders. For this reason, as it should always be, absolute reliance on scriptures alone is what we need. We must all go back to our Bibles (i.e. King

James Bible in English), and return to the basics. We just can't rely on much of the people who occupy the role of leadership now, for they are like a foot out of joint. We would talk about the nature of, and who are qualified to be elders in subsequent chapters of this book. But those who are truly elders ought to meet, discourse the issue, come to an agreement as the Holy Spirit leads them, and what they conclude through the Spirit of God shall all churches accept. The conclusion of the elders should be published to the view of everybody globally. In our days, this should include on websites, blogs, Facebook fan pages, twitter, magazines, and so on. This should be done so that all, like the Berean Christians, may be able to observe these things and search the scriptures to see if these things are so. This way, heresy shall not be given provision to be a source of division, but to manifest those who are approved. When the apostles held theirs, it didn't mark the beginning of a new church, probably with the name, "Pauline Christians Assembly." Rather, it made it clear that Paul and Barnabas were approved, it silenced heretics, and the church remained united.

This is how disputable issues ought to be handled. In the recent past, disputable issues has been handled by breaking the church. With much joy people break the church for profit and not in pursuit of truth. But we've seen, here, that when disputable issues arise, never should it result in fragmenting the church. The council of elders, and continuous disputation, insisting that the truth be maintained, are the means by which matters are to be resolved. If any man in the name of finding faults with doctrines or practices start his own church, he is a thief. Let us return to the practice of holding councils of elders in resolving issues.

How The Council Of Elders Should Hold

"And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written."

(Acts 15:15)

It is good that we've noted the importance of the council of elders. My fear is that ill meaning people would take the occasion to start unnecessary and unintelligent disputations and ferment unending troubles. For this reason, to avoid the continuous disputation of unnecessary rancour, let's take a look at how

an effective council of elders must be held.

My joy in reading scriptures is that we have a template for virtually all things. It is a glad thing that we also have a template to serve as a guide when it comes to how the council of elders should hold.

1. Reason for holding:"And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question." (Acts 15:1 - 2). When in the cause of preaching the gospel, out of zeal, or undue insistence on traditions contrary to what is necessary to our faith, unacceptable teachings emanates causing confusion or constituting an unnecessary burden to the brethren, a council of elders should hold. By this I mean issues that originates from well meaning people over things that are not conspicuously wrong. I'm not saying that a council of elders should hold for everything, whether trivial or not, probably to discuss whether or not it were good for a Christian to have a glass of water before a meal. Or to discuss whether or not it is right to put ones wife away and marry another. That is clearly evil and the party which raises such issues are evil and ill-meaning seeking after the flesh and not after righteousness. They've clearly got an evil motive which could be easily refuted. Council of elders are to settle matters that are hard to determine especially of which both parties are well meaning and seek after righteousness and pleasing God. Matters for which a man may consider starting his own church.

2. Who should attend:"they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question." (Acts 15:2). All the parties from which these disputations emanated from should have at least a representative who is very well acquainted with the claims of his party. All the elders and devout men should be present. Others who wish to avail themselves of the opportunity to observe the proceedings should be encouraged to come.

3. Where should it hold:"they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this

question." (Acts 15:2). The council should hold in a place most convenient for the elders. If the disputing parties think that their claims is anything to reckon with, they should go to the elders, and not the elders coming to them. The elders' convenience is the decisive factor here.

4. The procedures and speaking privileges:"But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses." (Acts 15:5). Everybody in attendance should be allowed to contribute in Bible based questions and suggestions. We observe that there were reasonings and disputations when the apostles met, but no shunning of anybody. Suggestions and questions from anybody should be encouraged as much as possible, but orderliness and reason must be maintained.

5. Concluding matters:"And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe." (Acts 15:7). Matters are to be concluded by elders who truly fit the definition of elders. Conclusion should be based on scriptural knowledge, genuine revelational knowledge, and the direct present guiding and leading of the Holy Ghost. There should be no place for mere personal opinions of the elders. Peter made reference to evident testimony of the working of the Holy Ghost in concluding that God accepts Gentiles just the way they were. I believe if Peter made reference to his own personal opinion, his state of mind would have been that of which he had when he was in a trance where he said, "not so Lord." (Acts 10:14) He'd have concluded this matter saying, "not so Paul. Not so Barnabas. They must be circumcised." But with the leading of the Holy Ghost, they came to a righteous conclusion.

6. What next after the conclusion:"Then pleased it the apostles and elders with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas and Silas, chief men among the brethren: And they wrote letters by them after this manner..." (Acts 15:22 - 23). Publishing the conclusion far and wide with the sign or seal signifying the authority of the elders is the next thing. In the case of the apostles, they sent chief men among the brethren to signify that they approve of the letter that is to be delivered to them. All well meaning Christians should accept it

when they perceive that the conclusion was according to the leading of the Holy Ghost, as it should be clearly inline with scriptures. The party proved wrong shouldn't feel humiliated by being proved wrong, but they should, in humility, accept the conclusion. Rather, they should be joyful to see that the will of God is done. By this shall they show that the zeal in which they acted was well intentioned and not a product of pride, haughtiness, or desire to ferment trouble. The conclusion should be published on websites, blogs, magazines and bulletins, social media, television and so on and so forth, for awareness and for the considerations of the body of Christ.

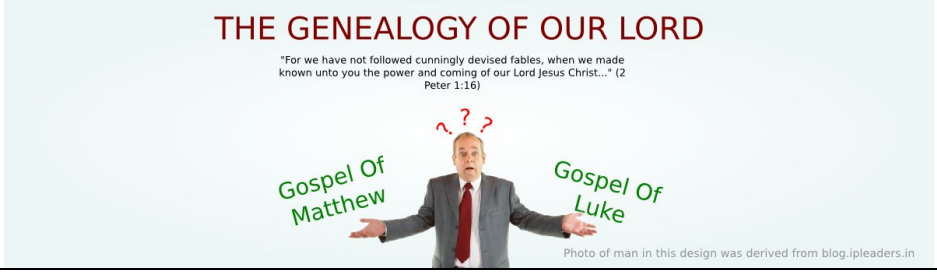
I hope that, with this in mind, all members of the various denominations would start disowning their denominations and start pressing for a united church. I hope that all owners of churches would start closing their churches, encouraging their leaders to resign, seeing that they had no basis at all to start their own church in the first place. This is the best thing for any well meaning person to do for the benefit of uniting the church of Christ. I can assure every church owner that would still desire to keep their church running that it's just a matter of time that their churches would close down against their will, if they don't close down their churches willingly and push for a united church. It's only a matter of time that all denominations will collapse being helplessly battered to the ground. This I shall consider an admonition of which the Bible tells us, "A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject." (Titus 3:10). Before you be rejected and your church closed against your wish, join forces in uniting the church today.

Brethren, if we do things this way, we'd get rid of heresy and maintain a united church, and be of one mind. No more will there be any need for schism. No more will there be a provision for vain men to hide under the guises of wanting to preach a truer truth divide the church. I pray that God will help us in holding our council of elders profitably in Jesus' name. Amen.

Header image gotten from: churchhistorylucas.files.wordpress.com

THE GENEALOGY OF OUR LORD

Posted on April 20, 2016, this article was written in the attempt to reconcile the records of the genealogy of our Lord found in Matthew and Luke. I guess I was quite successful though, but take a look and see if it helps you.


THE GENEALOGY OF OUR LORD
"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ..." (2 Peter 1:16)
Gospel Of Matthew
Gospel Of Luke
Photo of man in this design was derived from blog.ipleaders.in

"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ..."

(2 Peter 1:16)

One of the seemingly contradictory subjects of the Bible is the genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ. It seems that one cannot accept both the record of Matthew and accept the record of Luke at the same time. Some say that the genealogy in one Gospel refered to the lineage of Mary, while the other refered to that of Joseph. But the two records say that they refered to that of Joseph. We needn't assume contrary to what is obvious that the two Gospels' genealogical records of Jesus were in any way for each of the parents of Jesus.
Here I seek to present to us why the two genealogical records are in total agreement.

Why Genealogies Should Not Bother Us

"Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do."

(1 Timothy 1:4)

Genealogy has little bearing on the Christian faith. What should bother us the most is our understanding of the Christian doctrine and things that are edifying. The verse above tells us plainly that we shouldn't give heed to endless

genealogies, saying they only minister questions and don't edify. So genealogies on general grounds are not important to us.

Why The Genealogy Of Christ Should Be Of Concern To Us

"Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh."

(Romans 1:3)

The Bible tells us that Jesus is of the seed of David according to the flesh. What then is this than a little genealogy? If Jesus is of the seed of David, it can only be confirmed through his genealogy. If we can't confirm this, we can't really prove his messiahship for the messiah must of necessity be in the lineage of David. He must also not just belong to David's lineage, he must also be heir of the throne of David.

Secondly, the Bible says to us, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." (1 Peter 3:15). If a man ask you for a reason of your hope, seeing the seemingly contradictory record of the genealogy of Christ, would you be ready to give him an answer? We ought always to be ready to give an answer no matter how the question about our hope is put forward to us.

Therefore, my aim is to provide sufficient evidences that we have concrete reasons to affirmatively say that the genealogy of Christ recorded in Matthew does not contradict the record in Luke.

Biological Children And Spiritual Children

"Master, Moses wrote unto us, If a man’s brother die, and leave his wife behind him, and leave no children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up

seed unto his brother."

(Mark 12:19)

It is the Jewish tradition that if a man dies without having children, his brother, or closest willing kin, should take his wife and raise children for him. From this we understand that he who says the child given birth to in such a manner is the son of the dead, and the son of the brother of the dead too are both correct. For easy understanding in this article, I'd like to say that the child given birth to in this manner is the spiritual son of the dead, and the biological son of the brother or closest kin of the dead.

The Genealogy Of Our Lord

"Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel."

(2 Timothy 2:8)

In the genealogy of Jesus, there are people who were both spiritual sons and biological sons. We can't merely assume that a person had died childless in the genealogy of Christ, we know for sure that this happened at least once. It is written, "Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol? is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure? wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not? O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah." (Jeremiah 22:28 - 30). The man referred to here as Coniah is the king of Israel Jechoniah.

Despite the great divide in the record of the two Gospels on the genealogy of Christ, both of them had two names in common, which are "Salathiel," and "Zorobabel." Zorobabel was the son of Salathiel. This Salathiel is the same one referred to as "Shealtiel" in most of the Old Testament books like Ezra, Nehemiah, and Hagai. His son Zorobabel was a great man who is the Zerubbabel to whom God made abundant promises to by the mouth of Hagai and Zachariah

including this, "This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it." (Zechariah 4:6 - 7). This is that Zorobabel.

Matthew recorded "Salathiel," to be the son of Jechoniah, while Luke recorded him to be the son of Neri. Since Jeremiah prophesied that Jechoniah shall be childless, we can safely come to the conclusion that Matthew's record was affected by these spiritual sons, while Luke was strictly biological. For this reason we can see that Neri and Jechoniah were connected only in David. Neri descended from Nathan the son of David and Jechoniah descended from Solomon the son of David, and king of Israel. Nathan and Solomon were very close kinsmen and were direct brothers and sons of the same mother as we can see in 1Chronicles 3:5.

From this also, it is most probable that Joseph, the father of Jesus, according to the flesh, was both a spiritual son and a biological one. This is why we see the differences in the names of the grandparents of Jesus.

We can notice that between David and Salathiel, we have about fifteen people according to Matthew, and about twenty according to Luke. So we understand that the royal lineage was shorter and had fewer people than that of their brethren. Though I have not adequate information to say this in regards to the Jewish people in particular, I think this is so because generally, amidst the people who are privileged to be able to afford to themselves a life of luxury, as we would expect of the royal family, the life expectancy is relatively longer, and child birth rate is directly proportional to the level of poverty in a society. This should explain why the list of people between David to Joseph was longer in Luke than in Matthew.

Both these genealogies are important. That of Matthew proves that Jesus is heir to the throne of David. And that of Luke proves that he is the biological son (seed), of David. Both these qualities must the messiah have. Thank God for the two records.

I sincerely hope you find this useful. Thank you and God bless you for making

time to read.

MYSTICISM OR THEOLOGY?

Posted on July 1, 2016, this article is a discourse on the importance of revelational knowledge to understanding the mysteries of God. It talks about mystycism being the right approach to knowing God in truth as opposed to theology. I know many use the word theology for good but, we must know that God must not be seen as a being to be studied, but we may know him according to how he, of himself, reveals himself to us. The audio is also available in MP3 and OGG formats. If your device is connected to the internet tap your prefered format to listen.

A Discourse On The Importance Of Revelational Knowledge To Understanding The Mysteries Of God

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"And they shall be all taught of God."

(John 6:45)

In the rise of many systems of belief and trampled old ways and values of life, we must try to see how things are in truth. Not every thing that is widely accepted is true, and not everything that is trendy is good.

We see today, there are many publishers who write about God. People also see it as spiritual to just keep getting books and reading them. This is helpful but may not be absolutely expedient and studying the nature of God may be more foolish than people think it is wise.

We know that the amount of theologians we have has increased in recent years. People say they want to start their own church to enable them teach people about God. But a lot of absurdity has been involved. I wish to speak on something based on what God laid in my heart as I reasoned in my self one day, after a

moment of an informal debate over an injunction of the Bible.

Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians was to chide them for the factions that had started to be in their midst. Some said they are Paul's followers, others, Peter's or Apollos', and still others said they were Christ's. Paul therefore condemned these actions accounting himself as nothing but a labourer whose labour is in vain without God. He condemned also everything called the wisdom and strength of men saying that all the wisdom of men is vanity and profitless and that our strength can't achieve anything for us. Nothing that is of man is profitable. He also clearly stated that nothing can be known about God by us. He said no man know the mind of God except the Spirit of God. So all our studying is vanity. Paul condemned everything about his knowledge except his doctrine, only because they were revealed to him by God. Therefore revelational knowledge is key to understanding the mysteries of God.

The Absurdity Of Theology

"Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?"

(Job 11:7 - 8)

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

(Romans 11:33)

"All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."

(Matthew 11:27)

Theology is defined as "the study of the nature of God." Now is that not absurd? We could take a frog to the lab and apply some chemical on it to preserve the body, and enable us study its nature, and we call that biology. So some people

also think that it were possible to take God into a lab and study his nature and we call that theology. Very absurd. I think Jesus made the absurdity of such a belief clear in his statement above. He says no body knows God except the son, so how can you study the nature of the God you don't know? And Jesus said "No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (John 1:18). Since we haven't seen God, to say we are studying him is to be self deceived. The god you seek the way you know how is nothing but the idol of your imaginations. The God you seek the way he ordains in the scriptures is the Almighty who reigns in the kingdom of men.

“Can creatures to perfection find Th’ eternal, uncreated Mind? Or can the largest stretch of thought Measure and search His nature out?”

There is a popular belief that you can study the nature of God through the Bible. The truth is however that though you read, you can have no tangible knowledge of God except the Holy Ghost opens your eyes. That is why it is written in 1 Corinthians 2:11 "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." So it is not that by studying the pages of the Bible you can understand the nature of God, but you begin to know God when the Holy Ghost begins to open your eyes to understand truly the things written in the Bible. However not every man can come to this knowledge of God, but every man can be a theologian, quite sadly. For it is written in 1 Corinthians 2:14-15 "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man." It takes the spiritual man to be taught of God and not a Doctor of theology.

The Profundity Of Mysticism

"And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."

(Hebrews 8:11)

Mysticism is "the spiritual apprehension of knowledge inaccessible to the

intellect being attained through loving God above all else, outright obedience to him, contemplation of him, prayer, study of the Bible, which all can be summarised as self surrender to God." It is not seeking to know God by taking him to the lab and getting to understand him by means of the intellect. It is not a quest for knowledge in the reading of many books. It is surrendering the self to be taught of the Spirit of God. Since we haven't seen God, mysticism is our bid to approach Christ to reveal him to us. It is the drawing near to the Holy Ghost to open your eyes.

Unlike theology, it is not we striving to know God by doing things such as reading books by every author, but we striving, not to know God, but to surrender the self so that we can be taught of him. To know him I surrender myself and strive to mortify the flesh so as to be pure that I might see him. This is the path to the true knowledge of God, that is why Jesus said "And they shall be all taught of God."(John 6:45), not they shall be taught about God, for revelations come to them who surrender themselves to God. He went on to say in the same verse "Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." (John 6:45). For this reason, we know that God himself teaches us. Job 32:8 also says "But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." If we must know him, we must learn of him. Therefore we know that theology (man's attempt to know God) has little or nothing to do with salvation, but being taught of God is how we come to Jesus.

It is written in 1 Corinthians 2:12-14 "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." So we understand that it is not possible for a carnal man to be taught of God though he reads all the books by every preacher. It is not a thing we can say is hard but a thing that is impossible. Engaging in what is hard is heroic, but engaging in what is impossible is futility, and such is the endeavour of theology. Not even the apostles attributed their knowledge of God to being taught of men. As it is written, those things which they know are thought of the Holy Spirit. Elsewhere, Paul further confirmed this truth when he

said in 1 Corinthians 4:4 "For I know nothing by myself." He also wrote in Galatians 1:11-12 "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." They received the knowledge of God freely and not after they had paid money to an institution and completed a course and graduated. It was free. Neither was it given to them by virtue of paying much sacrifice through much study. In this respect too, it was free. So where does that leave all your theologians and seminarians? For we are not Christians for the amount of doctrines we accept, or the extent a local church accepts us, for it is written "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Romans 8:14).

Mysticism is about just making the self teachable so as to receive tutorship from God himself. To be teachable is to be be outrightly obedient to Jesus as a result of loving him above all things else, that is why he said "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." (John 14:21). He will manifest himself to those who love him and who keep his commandments. It is not a gamble. It is a sure bargain. Love me and I will manifest myself to you, love me not and you'll have none of me. Love me, and you'll keep my commandments, love me not and you won't. Simple.

The reason why many know so little about God is lack of obedience. Had they obeyed the blessed Lord, he would have manifested himself to them. They should have known the beauty of the knowledge of God, the awesomeness of his mysteries and have been in the realms of divine fellowship with the Holy One. So should they have been guided into ALL truth. But the love of this world has kept all these from them. They insist on clinging to the selfish desires which posses a barrier between us and our teachableness. But mysticism which is the surrendering of the self teaches us to throw all these hinderances away.

Understanding this way of knowing God, à Kempis Thomas (1380-1471), said, “He who is made learned by the gift of grace and taught wisdom by the stroke of the withdrawal thereof, will not dare to claim any good thing for himself, but will rather confess that he is poor and needy.” So not only does such way of knowing God gives a clearer understanding of God but it also makes us humble. Knowledge from the laboratory no doubt puffs up. It puffs people up so much

that they who embark on getting it wish to dress and look differently from the rest of the people they ought to call brethren. He went on to say “Great is the difference between a godly man, illuminated with wisdom, and a scholar learned in knowledge and given to books. Far nobler is that doctrine which floweth down from the divine fulness above, than that which is acquired laboriously by human study.”

Martin Luther, the reformer, (1483–1546), also agreeing with us said “We have therefore need to pray that God will lead us and make us taught of God, that is, ready to learn from God; and will Himself, as He has promised, write His law in our hearts; otherwise there is no hope for us." There is no hope for laboratory theologians, neither is there hope for they who rely on them.

There is no way we can know God if he is not willing to teach us himself. No amount of studies, or seminars attended, or sermons listened to, can make us know God that is why we read, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." (Matthew 11:27). Only whomsoever the Son "WILL" reveal him. It's all about the will of him who is able to reveal him. Outside revelation, no one can know God. And no one can have the revelation of God without surrendering the self. You must not love the world.

Why The Teachers If Mysticism?

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers."

(Ephesians 4:11)

The question now is why then, if we can be taught of God, do we need teachers? The glaring truth is that the Bible emphasises the role of teachers, people who are to teach others, so much that we can't be reasonable without acknowledging the importance of teachers. But why did it say "And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord." (Hebrews 8:11). We read all through the Bible about the duty of teaching others.

We can hear Paul giving several instructions to Timothy and to Titus about how they ought to teach others. By doing this, he himself was teaching them, and he was teaching them to teach others about how to teach yet others. Then why these teachers if mysticism?

The answer to this is found in the portion of the Bible where it says "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." (1 Peter 4:11). There is the answer. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God. Meaning teachers are to be just a mouth piece of God. Not saying things they got out of the laboratory, or mere opinions (no matter how intellectual it sounds), but speaking because God has spoken. I believe, that in the absence of God's speaking voice, there ought to be a pen-drop silence in the churches. Too much of men speaking in the church today, it is time to observe silence that God may begin to speak. Also he says, "if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth." Still emphasising that we should not teach things we deduced from the laboratory to others but teach things God gives to us to teach. This way we are mere instruments and not teachers as it is understood in the world. We are not those who will go make research and come up with a thesis to deliver a speech on their findings, but we are, or should be they who surrender the self wholly to God so as to be taught of him and in turn we teach others.

Hebrews 5:12 says, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat." The teachings of the apostles was referred here as the teachings of the oracles of God. Not because they intimidated the church with this big name, "oracles of God," but being they who were wholly surrendered to God, they were truly oracles, and it such that Peter says in his epistle should be the nature of them who teach. "Let him speak as the oracles of God."

The psalmist wrote in Psalms 119:18 "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." That is why I love that lady Frances Ridley Havergal (1836-1879). She being a mystic always spoke and sang of complete surrender to God. Two verses I got from her hymn:

"Lord Speak To Me" goes:
"Lord, speak to me, that I may speak
In living echoes of Thy tone;
As Thou hast sought, so let me seek
Thy erring children lost and lone...
O teach me, Lord, that I may teach
The precious things Thou dost impart;
And wing my words, that they may reach
The hidden depths of many a heart."

That is the right understanding of the duty of a teacher. I never read of her ever standing before a congregation to preach (for she must have known her boundary as a woman,) but those who came across her were really edified. I have been greatly edified by her works and writings too.

So we know that teaching is good, for that reason, studying also is good. Let us strive to be given to studies. But what should we study? Just as we should be taught by teachers who teach what they have been taught of God, so also we should read books of people who write things they have been taught of God. Not reading books of laboratory theologians.

What Shall The Teachers Do?

"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

(Acts 20:32)

The thing which a teacher should strive to do, above all things else, is to push people to their God, and his word, and not to drag them to the self or to any other man. To push them to have a knowledge with ever increasing depth by self surrender, loving God above all things else, contemplation of him, studying the scriptures, prayer, and outright obedience to God. Paul said he commends the people to God and to the word of his grace. Simple.
Acts 11:22-23 says "Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the

church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch. Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord." (Acts 11:22 - 23). "Cleave to the Lord," not "cleave to Barnabas" was his exhortation. In 2 Corinthians 4:5 Paul also says "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus 'sake."

Never ever say, in the cause of evangelism or anything else, "come join my church." That is selfishly evil. Paul said "I commend you to God and to the word of his grace." This is what we ought to do also, emphasising that men ought to draw close to God to learn of him too in the reading of his word and not to emphasise a denomination, or a teacher. For no man may better teach a man than God himself. Our devotion is always marred by our frailties and weaknesses, and our faults also make others shy away from the truth when they have their eyes fixed on us. But when they have their eyes fixed on God who has no faults, weaknesses, or frailties, but only perfection in all things, they shall not miss the mark but walk steadily heavenward.

When we've done these, God will fulfil in us what he fulfilled in Paul who said "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place." (2 Corinthians 2:14). Let us both now and always cease to speak as men but as oracles of God.

So, my brethren, here is the summary of the matter; "God giveth to a man that is good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy." (Ecclesiastes 2:26). God bless you as you surrender yourself wholly to God so that he may teach you.

Prayer:*Father, help us abandon all our ideas and opinions, and surrender the whole of the self to you, soaring into the depths of your mysteries as your Spirit bears us up. Teach us by yourself always O God, and if we must teach others, then teach us what to teach others in Jesus' name. Amen.*

WHY WE WORSHIP ON SUNDAYS

Posted on July 3, 2016, this article was written to rebuff the beggarly heretical argument of the Seventh Day Adventists concerning Sunday worship.

A Happy Sunday Message

"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them..."

(Acts 20:7)

Sunday is the day of the Lord in which he rose from the dead. It is not to be mistaken with Sabbath, for the Sabbath is the last day of the week while Sunday is the first.

Some people criticise our worshiping on Sunday saying being SUN-day, it is a demonic gathering involving the worship of the sun god. At least I know the seventh day Adventists have this belief amidst their many other beggarly doctrines. This however is a foolish assumption. These critics don't know that the day in which one worships does not define the God he worships. Do these people therefore claim that Jesus rose from the dead by the power of the SUN-god because he rose on a SUN-day? We know that the sun god is as powerless as

the very fables that claims it exists. It couldn't have raised Christ from the dead. So it is foolish to attribute worshiping on Sundays to the worship of the sun god.

The Bible tells us "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof" (Psalm 24:1). By this we know that God owns all the days of the week. He owns the Saturdays as well as the Sundays. There is no day that he doesn't own, therefore there is no day that it isn't right to worship God. If we as Christians have agreed to honour the Lord Jesus Christ by gathering every first day of the week since that was when he rose from the dead, it is just a mark of love and gratitude and imply nothing about the sun god. The accusation is indeed based on just ridiculous superstitions.

The book of Romans 11:16 says, "For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches." So if the first day of the week be holy unto us, so are all the days holy alike, and as Christians we are to behave accordingly, always lifting up holy hands in worship and glorifying God in our hearts wherever we may find ourselves.

Happy Sunday! Worship God in Spirit and in truth.

Top image gotten from, holyspiritactivism.wordpress.com

TITHES

Posted on July 4, 2016, this article was written to show that tithe is not a doctrine of the Christian church, and that it is alien to what God ordained for the church from any perspective you wish to look at it. I also presented the evil origin of its being practiced in the church today.

"And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all."

(Genesis 14:18 - 20)

"If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law."

(Hebrews 7:11 - 12)

Dear brethren I wish to talk on a doctrine that jumped through the window to establish itself as one of the church doctrines. Your leaders won't like it, but it is true.

In my earlier years, I used to play a game called Grand Theft Auto 2. To save your game you must go to a church and pay $50,000. The game was a game of gangsters and criminal activities. You killed, you fought with the police, SWAT, special forces, and army. Steal vehicles. Crush people to death with your vehicle. You grind people in grinders and used them for hot dogs just because you wish to create an occasion for a gang to poke fun at another. You did innumerable evils and got paid for all these. And when you wished to save, you go to a church and they'll take from you that money you've been paid for crime. If you

have that amount, you could save your game else you can't. When you approached the church, you'd hear the most celestially divine organ being played. If you step into the church without having up to $50,000, you'd hear a hoarse voice shout at you, "Damnation! No donation! No salvation." But when you have that amount or more, they'd take the $50,000, and you'd hear the same voice, this time more friendly, say, "Hallelujah! Another soul saved." That was a bad tainting of the church's image, but worse have been done to the fold and the image of the church of Christ than these in the name of tithing. Let's look at it together.

The Fool I Almost Remained

"How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?" ***(Proverbs 1:22)***

"The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." ***(Psalm 119:130)***

I was bound to be the must pro-tithing Christian. I believed that God was just being absolutely benevolent when he said tithe is just ten percent. I felt it would be too bad for any Christian to really be giving God just ten percent. I supposed that if things get so financially bad, only then should you give ten percent, but you should never go below ten percent. I felt that a man would be very ungrateful if he spent ought out of his income for anything other than for their basic necessities. He ought after this to give back everything to God. As much as possible, you ought not to take yourself on a treat, you ought not to buy yourself ice cream. That won't satisfy your hunger. You ought, as much as possible, not spend at all and give everything to God. I believed this. If the giving of ten percent was truly to God as the clergy would like us to believe, then I was right.
I think that when God sees the heart of a man, he'd come down and take the veil away from his heart. That was what God in his mercy did to me. One day, as I was heading to church on a Sunday morning, I carefully packaged the tithe I was supposed to give at the church. It was in my habit to play my audio Bible making my device play chapters of the Bible randomly when going to the church. On such days, it used to be a happy one where I'd say something like this

in prayer, "Father, remember how I'm being faithful to you in paying my tithe, please bless me and prosper me." With such prayer I'd strut happily to church. On this day, however, as I went, the first chapter that played to my hearing was chapter 5 of the book of Ecclesiastes which began this way, "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil." Hearing this, and seeing my tithe in my hand, I wondered whether this were a coincident or if it spoke of my tithe as being a sacrifice of fools.

I ignored it and kept going about my activities without caring. Another day as I went to church, probably the next time I had a tithe to pay, I packaged my tithe again. I played my audio Bible again, and the first chapter again was the same chapter 5 of the book of Ecclesiastes which began this way, "Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil." I wondered again. It seemed funny to me how this sacred thing should be made to seem vile to me, so I ignored it yet again, though I didn't discard it completely from my mind.

However as I was making some eschatological studies, I bumped into an article that spoke on tithing as being unscriptural. Reading it and recalling my experience, I got down to study about tithing for myself. I discovered first of all that tithing, even if it were right was taught heretically for gain. Secondly, that there is no such thing as mandatory giving in the new testament, therefore, even if tithing were right, it isn't mandatory for any Christian. You give if you so wish. Thirdly, I discovered that tithing was not right at all. Fourthly, I discovered that tithing is extortion. Lastly, I discovered that not only is tithing passively wrong, it is a sin and all tithers are sinners. If you are such, Christ is willing to forgive you. Repent today!

Someone would say, "tithers never lack." That is just one of those statements that you can't verify coined to make more gullible the already gullible. Shame on the blind guides of the blind. That was how I came to know the truth. Now let us look at some lies, then we'd look at some truths.

What Do People Preach About Tithing?

"Should thy lies make men hold their peace? and when thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?"

(Job 11:3)

"But ye are forgers of lies, ye are all physicians of no value."

(Job 13:4)

There are some error that are being preached concerning tithe that even Moses did not command the Jews to do. The first is that tithe is AT LEAST ten percent. Well that is a lie. Moses didn't say tithe is AT LEAST ten percent, he said tithe is ten percent. Looking at the pains people were commanded to take in taking stock of their increase, we could say tithing is EXACTLY ten percent. The Bible says, "And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD." (Leviticus 27:32). They were asked to count and every tenth is for God. If this giving of tithe is more than ten percent, it does not fit the definition of tithe any more. These preachers would want us to pay more than ten percent and encourage us to do so. They'd tell you a testimony of a man that gave ninety percent of his income as tithe and God blessed him beyond his hard work. Fables.

The second is tithing is one-tenth. Tithing is one-tenth, quite alright, but it is better described as the tenth, and not one-tenth. These throws out of the window the claim that goes, "God first." The Bible says, "And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD." (Leviticus 27:32). If you count your herd and you have nine, you don't have a tithe to pay. If you have five, you don't need to kill one and give half of it as tithe. If you have nine, you don't need to give 0.9 of your sheep. The tenth is what is a tithe.

The third is that tithe is the tenth of everything, but there is a big question mark to that. It is not certain, as it is far more likely that tithe consisted of goods, especially agricultural, and not money. In defining tithe, the Bible says, "And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD’s: it is holy unto the LORD." (Leviticus 27:30). To convince people that money is to be tithed, a lie is told to support the claim. It is said that in this time, the reason why God did not command the Jews to pay tithe is because money was not in vogue then. People traded in produce. But money was already in use as early as the seventeenth chapter of the book of Genesis. Abraham himself bought a burying place for Sarah his wife with money. Throughout the books of Leviticus, Numbers, and Deutronomy, the word "money" was used but not in defining what tithe is. However, today, you dear not insult these "priests"

with goods, they'd tell you," go and sell it and bring the money."

The History Of Tithing

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

(John 8:44)

Tithing was never a church doctrine. It has been refuted as not being one of the church doctrines from the apostles' time down until about 700 AD. The Councils of Elders before this time rejected it. People were forbidden from taking money for service to God. At a time, it was prohibited that travelling on a missionary journey, a man should stay beyond a particular amount of days in the house of a person who takes him in as a guest. Every form of acquiring money in the name of service to God was rejected and/or at least frowned at. The church never accepted tithe as a church doctrine till about 700 AD. All the true revivalists and reformers after this period all denounced the tithe doctrine as not being part of church doctrine. Not even did the apostles collect tithes of the early church, neither did Christ (though he is our High Priest) collect tithes of his disciples. Why has it now become the strictest church doctrine? For if you fornicate, preachers would say you could be forgiven. In the case of every other sin, they could sing "grace that is greater than all our sins." But when it is tithe, "you rob God." You won't go scot free. God will punish you severely because you have robbed him. And that teaching is greed at work.

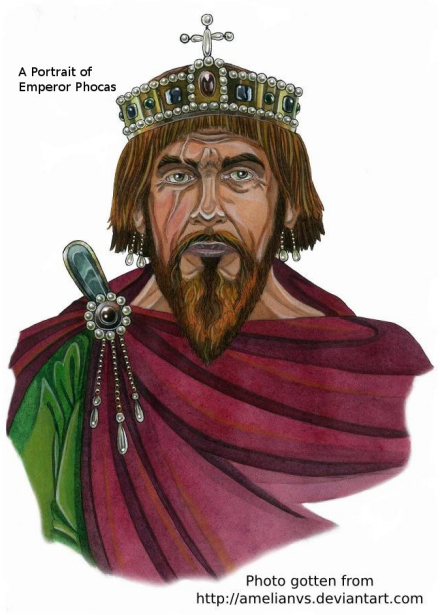
What Happened Around 700 AD?

"For among my people are found wicked men: they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men."

(Jeremiah 5:26)

The church has always been one before this time. All the church maintained a

uniform doctrine. Anytime there were a wind of heretic doctrine, a Council of Elders would be held to address the issue. Their decision would be accepted by all the churches. About these times also, the Byzantine Empire was a secure haven for the Christians. Constantine the great who was the first Roman Emperor to be converted to Christianity had granted freedom to all religious groups including Christianity. He himself, however, actively promoted Christianity. He established the empire upon scriptures. Byzantine Empire is the Roman Empire, but became popularly known as Byzantine because Constantine moved the seat of power of his government to Byzantium which is in modern day Istanbul, Turkey.



Before this 700 AD, some thing very ugly happened. The emperor of the Byzantine Empire by the name Mauritius, a deeply pious man, was murdered by the General of his army by the name Phocas. This Phocas betrayed his master, and sought to take the throne by force. Mauritius, not willing to resist his evil General, abdicated and retired to his monastery, but Phocas went after him, captured him in his monastery. This pious man was forced to watch the beheading of his own sons before he was himself beheaded. The evil General threw their bodies into the sea and their heads were exhibited in Constantinople. A lot of evil was said to have been done by this man after his ascension to power. You would expect that to such a wicked scoundrel, not even another scoundrel would send a letter of commendation, but Pope Boniface sent flattery letters to this man. When you flatter a wicked man in his wickedness, he'd be so surprised at it that he'd be so impressed. Phocas was so impressed that he handed the

Pantheon of Rome over to the Pope to do what he so pleased with it. Do you wonder what the Pope did with it? Here is Martin Luther's account of it:
"*In the year 606, Emperor Phocas, the murderer of that good and godly Emperor Mauritius, and the first erector of the Pope's primacy, gave this temple Pantheon to Pope Boniface the Third, to make thereof what he pleased. He gave it another name, and instead of All-Idols he named it the Church of All-Saints; he did not number Christ among them, from whom all saints have their sanctity, but erected a new idolatry, the Invocation of Saints.*

"In my chronicle, I expound the name of Bonifacius thus: Bonifacius is a Popish name, that is, a good form, fashion, or show, for under the colour of a good form and show he acted all manner of mischief against God and man.

"As I was at Rome, I saw this church; it had no windows, but only a round hole on the top, which gave some light. It was vaulted high, and had pillars of marble stone so thick that two of us could scarcely fathom one about. Above, on the vault, were portrayed all the gods of the heathen, Jupiter, Neptune, Mars, Venus, and how else they are called. These gods were at a union, to the end they might fool and deceive the whole world; but Christ they cannot endure, for he hath whipped them out. Now are the Popes come, and have driven Christ away again; but who knoweth how long it will continue?"

These are the wicked things that transpired against the body of Christ that saw the Pope rise to primacy. And it was the Pope who after about a hundred years after instituted the the very unholy extortive doctrine of tithing under Charlemagne, the first Holy Roman Emperor. "Holy" was what they called their empire because as Luther has said, under the colour of the good they acted all manner of mischief against God and man. Many other extortive teachings were taught by the Pope and popish people which pious men down the ages keep denouncing. But greedy men would always go back and deep their hands into the Pope's smelly latrine to bring out this tithe doctrine to extort the poor.

List Of Men Who Denounced Tithing

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."

(John 10:27)

As I've said that pious men have denounced this doctrine. Lest it seems that I'm alone in this belief, or that my revelations and findings are contrary to the stance of saints approved of God, below is a list of some of them (religious bodies and other institutions also included) derived from russkellyphd.blogspot.com. You could just scan through but you could study it carefully too.

Clement of Rome 100
Didache 100
Justin Martyr 165
Tertullian 230
Origen 255
Cyprian 258
Waldenses 1150+-
Thomas Aquinas 1275
John Wycliff 1384 (The first man to see to the translation of the Bible to English.)
John Huss 1415
German Peasants 1520
Ana baptists 1525
Erasmus 1536
Otto Brumfels 1534
Martin Luther 1546
Philip Melanchthon 1560
Separatists Amsterdam 1603
John Smythe 1609 Baptist
John Robinson 1610
English Parliament 1650+-
Puritans & Plgrims Mass 1650+-
John Cotton 1652 Puritan
Roger Williams 1636 Baptist
Little Parliament 1653
Oliver Cromwell 1658
John Milton 1658 Puritan
Particular Baptists 1660
John Owen 1680 Baptist
Francis Turretin 1687

John Bunyan 1688 Baptist
Quakers 1768
John Gill 1771 Baptist
John Wesley 1791
BAPTISTS IN AMERICA 1800s
Adam Clarke 1832 Baptist
Charles Buck 1833
J C Philpot 1835 Baptist
Charles H Spurgeon 1832 Baptist
Parsons Cooke 1850
Samuel Harris 1850
Edward A Lawrence 1850
John Peter Lange 1876
Henry William Clark 1891 Englllish
S H Kellogg 1891
G Campbell Morgan 1898 Congregational
Albert Vail 1913 Baptist
Frank Fox 1913
David MaConaughy 11918 Episcopal
William Pettingill 1932
John Harvey Grime 1934 Baptist
John T Mueller 1934 Lutheran
H E Dana 1937 Bapt Historian
R C H LENSKI 1946 Lutheran
Lewis Sperry Chafer 1948
W E Vine 1949
James F Rand 1953
Francis Pieper 1953 Lutheran
Ray Stedman 1951
L L McR 1955 Catholic
Paul Leonard Stagg 1958 Baptist
Hiley H Ward 1958 Baptist
Roy T Cowles 1958
Elizabeth P Tilton 1958
R C Rein 1958 Lutheran
Robert A Baker 1959 Bapt Historian
Wick Bromall 1960

John Byron Evans 1960
Norman Tenpas 1967
James Edward Anderson 1967
Alfred Martin 1968
CHARLES C RYRIE 1969 DTS
Jerry Horner 1972 S Baptist
Pieter Verhoef 1974
Dennis Wretlind 1975
Jack J Peterson 1978 Pres
Donald Kraybill 1978
Jon Zens 1979 Baptist
Richard Cunningham 1979
S Bapt Gary Frieson 1980
JOHN MACARTHUR 1982-2000
Paul Fink 1982
George Monroe Castillo 1982
Tony Badillo 1984
James M Boice 1986
Michael E Oliver 1986 Rest
W Clyde Tilley 1987
Scott Collier 1987
Ronald M Campbell 1987
R E O White 1988
William McDonald 1989
Charles Swindoll 1990 Dallas Seminary
Rhodes Thompson 1990
J VERNON MCGEE 1999
Jerome Smith 1992
CRAIG BLOMBERG 1993 Denver Seminary
J Duncan M Derrett 1993
Walter Kaiser Jr 1994 Gordon-Cromwell
Moises Silva 1994
Benny D Prince 1995
Brian K Morley 1996
Linda L Belleville 1996
Ron Rhodes 1997
Ernest L Martin 1997

Michael Webb 1998
R Johnston 1999
Mark Snoeberger 2000 Baptist
Stuart Murray 2000 Eng
George W Greene 2000
Old Line Primitive Baptists 2000
RUSSELL EARL KELLY 2001 Baptist
Jonathan Kitchcart 2001
Frank Viola 2002
George Barna 2002
Michael Morrison 2002
Elliott Miller 2003
Matthew Narramore 2004
David Alan Black 2004 Baptist SEBTS
Andreas Kostenberger 2007 Baptist SEBTS
Danny Akin 2007 Baptist SEBTS

The list goes on and on and on. That you condemn tithes doesn't make any a saint or approve their works, but note the names of many noble men who served our Lord and were evidently approved of him. Are they who are on this side which I am not far more than those few on the contrary. They are, by far, outnumbered. The lives of some of these were far more approved than they who say they are "priests" whose signs approval are not true signs but clever lies, hypocrisy, and lying miracles. They may wish to count the Popes and popish persons, or other men who for any reason at all have supported the tithe as a church doctrine, and may have figures more than could be listed above of men who condemned the doctrine, but the ill-meaning profane pagans in religious outfits don't count. For this reason, a Martin Luther alone outnumbers them all. A John Wesley outnumbers them one to a million.

Why The Sacrifices Of Fools Are Evil

"For I the Lord love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering."

(Isaiah 61:8)

Now why is the sacrifice of fools evil? It is evil because they, in giving to what

God has not appointed, they aid it. They aid what is against God's will.

You may wonder why, but who gave the power to the Pope to commit the atrocities he carried out? The Pope and popish persons have killed many people in history, they've waged many wars, they've suppressed many people, extorted others, and reign supreme as a harlot that believes she shall never be in want. Who gave him this power? The tither. The tither and they who gave foolishly to his course are his sponsors and are partakers in his killings and bloodshed, wars, extortions, and establishment of that adulterous kingdom.

By what is division in the church sustained? The sacrifice of fools! For if not for the sacrifice of fools, all denominations would have closed down. Those who call themselves leaders would have lesser reason, in fact, close to no reason to keep the church divided. But by the kind sponsorship offered as a sacrifice by fools, they are sustained and prevail.

If it is evil for men to seek to divide the church, then it is more evil to help these evil enterprise by sponsorship, for without sponsorship, they'd fail. Every tither is an active sponsor of church division. In the past, men would think twice, pray, fast, and brazen up for the worst, willing to suffer humiliating loss if they fail before starting any service in the name of God. For such they embark on sacrificially with their own resources. As I write this lines, I just began reading the book of George Müller, a man who accomplished much in his selfless service for God and humanity. He boasted saying, “I never asked aid from a single individual.” Yet he succeeded with a remarkable success. Before he began this ministry, he committed into the hands of God in simple trust that God will provide for the ministry and God did. But because of the sponsorship of the tither, any hungry fellow can go to the seminary, and when he graduates, he thinks he is entitled to the ten percent of believers.

Tithes makes imbeciles of its beneficiaries. Every person that is given everything he ever needs from the time he was born to the time when he becomes a grown up will become an imbecile. He'll spend foolishly, he talk foolishly (out of joblessness), he'll have contempt on those who are not as privileged as he is though they may be more hard working and intelligent than he, he'll become a menace. Many church leaders do talk about things they ought not to. They preach nonsense. They probably haven't got the need to put their brains to

serious thinking. They have surplus for their wants. They don't need to work like you and think carefully, first on how to make profit for a living, and also how to maximise this profit. You cannot compare the teachings of men who through sorrows sustain themselves and these people who while their time away in their ivory towers. The difference is clear. Who made them imbeciles? The tither.

What Then Is The Sacrifice Of The Wise?

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

(Romans 12:1)

Many people today often think, as they are encouraged to, that all God requires them to do in regards to service to him is to go and work and after making profit come and throw ten percent at him, but this is wrong. God wants you to offer acceptable sacrifice to him. It is not all sacrifice that is acceptable to him. I believe it were better not to make sacrifices at all than to make an unacceptable sacrifice to him.

He said, "And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts." (Malachi 1:8).

There are many things a true Christian can offer to God as a sacrifice for example, praise is also a sacrifice. But from the text above, we are told that acceptable sacrifice is our reasonable service. We are to present our bodies to God to use them for his purpose. John Wycliffe also agrees with this when he taught that all lay men were priests and the refusal to render service to God in this capacity is to defraud their Lord-In-Chief which is God.

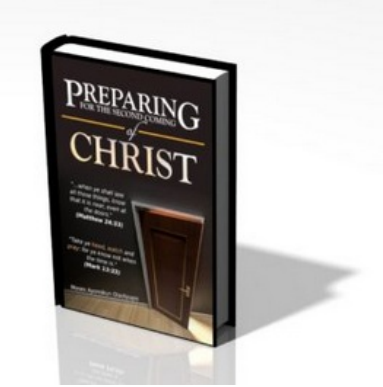
I request you the reader to begin to seek how you may begin to offer reasonable service to God. Look out for what you can do. Would you run an outreach with your resources and time to fend for the motherless and bring them up in the way of the Lord. Will you with your resources and time go from house to house preaching the Gospel? Will you with your time and resources establish training

centres in rural places where they can't afford education, teach them trades for free and teach them the way of the Lord as well? Will you embark on missionary journeys to preach the Gospel where it has never been heard before? Will you write articles and other publications to edify the brethren? Will you sing songs that could save a sinner? Will you along side any of these intercede fervently and regularly for the brethren and the world? Will you offer yourself, yourself and not your ten percent, as a living sacrifice? Will you render to God a reasonable service. Dear brethren, pray, think, pray again, and start working. This is your reasonable service.

I pray that God will help us to understand this and give us the grace to offer ourselves as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to him. I pray that the extortion of believers comes to a perpetual and abrupt halt in Jesus' name. Amen.

THE SPIRIT OF THE ANTICHRIST

Posted on July 25, 2016, this article talks about the operations of the spirit of the Antichrist. I later included it in my book titled, "PREPARING FOR THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST." The full book can be downloaded for free HERE.



"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist."

(2 John 1:7)

We are in an age where the spirit of the Antichrist is pervading every sphere of human existence whether it is the financial, political, educational, entertainment, religion, and many other spheres including the church. Therefore we need to understand the operations of this evil spirit or evil spirits.

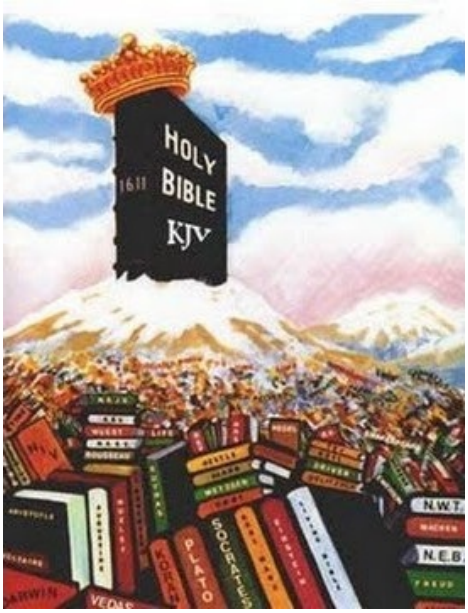
Now, the Bible says it quite plainly and easily that we can know when the spirit of the Antichrist is at work by simple confession (1 John 4:2-3). This is very easy, plain, and straight forward, but my brethren, it is not as easy as we think. For all these modern day translations of scriptures have, with their letters, defiled these verses and rendered it unintelligible, and by so doing, they've made it

useless. But let us look at what this passage is really saying.

Before we go on to look at what it is saying, let us look at what modern day translations of the Bible have done to this highly important passage of scriptures. We'd just look at two translations and see the effects they have on the truth of the passage and how this has affected the church over the years. You may also agree that this has affected your mindset as it has mine.

First, the New Living Translation. I wonder why it's not called the Dead Translation. It reads, “This is how we know if they have the Spirit of God: If a person claiming to be a prophet acknowledges that Jesus Christ came in a real body, that person has the Spirit of God. But if someone claims to be a prophet and does not acknowledge the truth about Jesus, that person is not from God. Such a person has the spirit of the Antichrist, which you heard is coming into the world and indeed is already here.” (1 John 4:2-3). Here we are told that once a prophet acknowledges the truth about Jesus, he has the Spirit of God and is of God.

On the other hand, The Message Bible claims, “Here's how you test for the genuine Spirit of God. Everyone who confesses openly his faith in Jesus Christ — the Son of God, who came as an actual flesh-and-blood person — comes from God and belongs to God. And everyone who refuses to confess faith in Jesus has nothing in common with God. This is the spirit of antichrist that you heard was coming. Well, here it is, sooner than we thought!” (1 John 4:2-3). So here, we are told that it is by mere confession of a person that we can know that the Antichrist is at work.



Well here is the truth of God as expressed in the King James Bible, "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." (1 John 4:2 - 3). So we see here that it is not a mere confession of the mouth, writings, etc. of any man that the Bible is speaking about here but the voice of a spirit (that is the working of a spirit). There is a whole world of difference. And that is why I say, it is not easy, for hearing the words of a spirit, as it either acknowledges the truth about Christ or not, requires that we consider carefully its workings as it manifests through people, laws, doctrines, lifestyle, fashion, etc.

To confess that Jesus did not come in the flesh is to say that all the scripture is false. It is to negate the entire truth of scriptures. It is to dishonour Christ. For if he didn't come in the flesh, you need not obey him, love him, follow him, and allow him into your heart. For this reason, we can say the spirit of the Antichrist has two major objectives, which are, to negate the truth of Christ, and to dishonour him. Every working of a spirit to achieve this end can only be of the Antichrist. That is what apostle John spoke of in his epistle, and not that once a person, whether repentant or not, confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, he is of God.

Before I began to write this article, I, being a member of an editorial team assigned with the responsibility of publishing a Christian magazine, I was

opposed to the inclusion of one of the articles submitted to be featured in the magazine. The article was about the life of a so called gospel artiste by the name of Lacrea. The photo submitted for the article had this "gospel artiste" wearing all manner of jewellery, having earrings in his ears, and having tattoo on his hands. I was strongly against the article as such a person did not fit what should be called a Christian, not to mention a Christian icon to be featured in a Christian magazine. Another member of the team said he completely approved of it and we had a brief argument about it. I was angry at such blunt denial of truth. In this state of mind, as I read my Bible, I came across 1 John 4:2-3. Having a wrong picture of what this passage was saying down the years, as I had used many of these modern day translations as a young Christian, I read it but didn't really see the truth as it is. It bothered me much that this passage seemed to defend what was clearly against other Biblical passages, that is if it were merely a confession of the mouth that determined whether or not a person was approved of God. It bothered me much as I read, for Jesus clearly said that many who called him Lord and even cast out devils in his name would still end up in hell (Matthew 7:21-23). We therefore know that there is something more than confession that makes a Christian. Those things I won't talk of here, but if 1 John 4:2-3 meant that confession was what we should look out for in testing the spirit at work, it contradicted the clear words of Jesus. When I was through with my reading, I went back to the passage to read it again, and that was when I realised for the first time that it is not referring to the confession of somebody but the operation of a spirit. That is the spirit that does not acknowledge that Jesus has come in the flesh is not of God but is an evil spirit of the Antichrist. It referred not to a person but spirits contrary to what modern translations seem to be saying.

Now it is very important that we test the spirit at work in every teaching, doctrine, system of belief, lifestyle, and every other sphere. Not just because it will do us a lot of good as a church but because it is also commanded by God. For before we read these things, it says, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." (1 John 4:1). So we are to try them. But in seeking to obey this commandment, the other translations give us a very wrong sign to look for in knowing when these spirits are at work.

If it were just the people that this passage spoke about, the Pope surely confesses that Jesus came in the flesh and yet is a devil counterfeit. So whether he lifts himself above church and scriptures, and makes himself equal to or more than Christ, for the mere fact that he claims that Jesus came in the flesh, he is of God. It is also on this ground of mere confession that a lot of worldly musicians have been accepted as gospel musicians, just because they include the name of Jesus in their song lyrics.

Now when a spirit is at work, it can, through the mouth of men, glorify God to achieve the end of dishonouring him. The pope by bearing the image of the cross as a sign of the acknowledgment of the death and resurrection of our dear Lord, dishonour God, shame the faith, war against the children of God, and wrestle with the truth of God. So the spirit of the Antichrist at work in the Pope though leads the Pope to honour Jesus verbally, to achieve the end of dishonouring him, his father, the scriptures, the Christian brotherhood, and all.

The Bible clearly says in Romans 16:17-19 "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil." There are many injunctions here which the modern day Christians ignore at large, however key to note here is the fact that we are clearly told here that people can, by "good words and fair speeches," do that which is evil. So be warned, the Antichrist also makes use of fair GOOD words. "Shout

hallelujah," "Jesus is Lord," "God reigns forever," etc. Very good words, but even with these can much evil be done.

Many gospel musicians would honour Jesus in lyrics, but the spirit of the Antichrist only uses these means to dishonour him in deed. They will live lives that are contrary to scriptures and have an appearance that is satanic with tattoos and all. The women, will scream Jesus, yet put on dresses that reveal the shape of their bodies, make up, put on jewelries, and even worship God with uncovered hair. So they worship and honour Jesus, but the spirit of the Antichrist in them only uses these means to dishonour him. For seeing such people are popular and aired everywhere, they dishonour Christ publicly to the whole world.

Women would mount pulpit and claim to be preaching to the honour of Jesus, but in the mere standing on the pulpit to speak, they have disobeyed the clear commandment of scriptures that a woman ought not to speak in the gathering of saints. They ought not to even ask questions. But they'd stand and teach and the world would see these appalling sight and wonder if the people of Christ have any brain at all. Little do they know that it is not the Spirit of Christ at work but the very Antichrist seeking to shame the gathering of saints (1 Corinthians 14:34-35, 1 Timothy 2:11-12). It is a shame for women to speak in our gatherings, but because the Antichrist at work in these people have the ultimate goal of dishonouring God, these people don't care.

Christ has told those he commissioned to go about his work to do it free of charge, saying, "freely ye have received, freely give." (Matthew 10:8). But Pastors, Bishops, and other church leaders have made the service of God just another career, profit making venture, franchise, and the very battle ground of greed. Yes, in almost all their sermons, Jesus is honoured, but their essence and the manner with which they go about the so called service to God have

dishonoured Christ and disgraced the Christian brotherhood.

The Bible translations we have also write many good things about Jesus, but ultimately dishonour him, confuse the children of God as they seek after God to walk in his ways, create an occasion for blasphemy among the unbelievers, and have been a silent source of division in the church. So though they acknowledge that he came in the flesh, thus honouring him and his truth, but they greatly dishonour him, wrestle against his will, wreck havoc on the assembly of the brethren, and much more. So where is the honour. These are the workings of the spirit of the Antichrist.

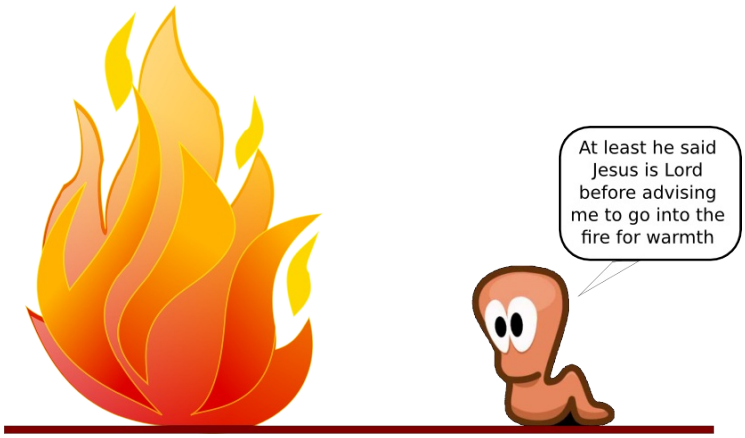
It is a welcome development to see that after every Christian broadcast we hear "Jesus is Lord," but, my brethren, let that not cause you to conclude that the Antichrist is not at work. We must still test the spirit at work. Even Nollywood that broadcast things that are inimical to living a consistent Christian life would have at the end of all their movies, "To God Be The Glory." It doesn't mean that God is glorified. In fact, one of their actresses who allegedly became a born again Christian opted out of it. So we must be wary of the spirits at work and we must resist the devil in every sphere we may find him and he has no choice but to flee.

As we didn't understand 1 John4:2-3 to mean the spirit of the Antichrist but thought it refers to people, all these devils have settled down in our gathering making a public mockery of Christ and the Christian church, and we have welcomed them totally. We must change our perspective now and begin to see the workings of the Antichrist and begin to resist them in all spheres we may encounter them. "Resist the devil," says the Lord.

It is too bad that we as Christians have allowed ourselves to be sheepish in our approach to things. I've seen many people say things like we should leave these things unchecked and hand them over to God that God will judge them. But I assure you that God will judge you who keep silent as equally as they who do wrong and dishonour Christ for you partake in this act of dishonouring Christ if you don't defend him before the onlooking world.

The Heavenly call to live a godly Christian life is not a call to simplicity. Throughout the Bible, the nature of a simple person is spoken against and is

likened to the life of a fool. How people who follow the only wise God choose a foolish path baffles me. Hear what the Bible says, "I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil." (Romans 16:19). Our simplicity should only be towards that which is evil. That's to say, we shouldn't be crafty in evil. In fact we should be so simple in that regards as not to know how to do them. We shouldn't merely lie, but we shouldn't know how to lie. But we are to be wise in discerning these evils that have risen in our ranks. We are to question everything and be so inquisitive about everything. Even things we perceive to be direct revelation from God until we find the Bible in complete agreement with it. My brethren, we ought to be wise.



It is also appalling that we have allowed ourselves to be gullible contrary to the injunction of scriptures. In fact, we have attached spirituality to gullibility. We accept everything that comes to us from the pulpit untested thinking that by this we honour God without "doubting." My brethren, that is foolishness. Test the spirit is what we are told. Jesus says, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." (Matthew 10:16). So we must hold everything in complete suspicion no matter what we think of the person speaking and only accept it when we are sure it is in full agreement with scriptures. Everything must be suspected before acceptance. And acceptance must be based on scriptures.

So when the Bible says we should test every spirit, it is not as easy as paying close attention so as to know whether or not a person called the name of Jesus or praised him, but you have to consider the ultimate thing achieved. Does it honour God or dishonour him. It does not matter the intentions of the person in question, whether it be good or evil. The antichrist can still work through good

motives to dishonour God.

So let us test every spirit. The spirit of the Antichrist is even in much of our modern day churches, much of our books and productions, much of the lifestyle we've accepted, and in ALL your modern day Bible translations. They seem to honour God, but ultimately dishonour him. Let us throw these things out of our homes and lives. I pray that we will not heed this sheepish method of judgment any more where we think that it is just a matter of whether a person say Jesus is come in the flesh or not. Let us be wise enough to start considering the workings of a spirit and not the mere confessions of a man's lips. Amen.

God bless you for making out time to read.

HORMONES OR THE MIND

Posted on July 31, 2016, this article is on whether hormones are the causes of sinful desires in adolescents or is it what their minds are fed with. The society have betrayed our youngs in exposing them to all manner of evils and don't want to own up to it so they present the lie that the hormones are responsible for sinful desires in adolescents. I seek to explain this issue in this article.

"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."
(James 1:13 - 14)

In the wake of people who try to present themselves as enlightened ones who desire to apply science in arriving at conclusions in regards to the moralistic aspect of the Christian faith, we have found ourselves in the midst of a confused and ill intentioned sophists. As if being organised by a fiendish mastermind, different societies experience the influence of these sophists to one degree or the other.

I wish to speak on that which has surfaced around us which is the attribution of sinful desires to hormones among younger people. I did a little survey, though poorly executed, about this issue and some honest people gave their views.

The question asked was, what is responsible for sensuality amidst younger people? Is it the so called hormonal "BOMBARDMENT," or is it the things the mind is fed with?

The answers I got were,
1. The things they feed their minds with. TV, Rock, etc.
2. The lust that is in the world entertains the senses of our young people. Jesus is their only hope.
3. As a man thinketh in his heart so he is. The actions of a man are controlled by

the state of his heart. There are a lot of information in this generation that pollutes the mind, when those informations are processed, it leads to the misbehaviours we see amongst young people. My brother it begins with the mind... The hormones were never meant to control us. If they control hunger, urine, excreta, even the pressure of the economy, they can control the appetite for sex... It's the Devil's scheme to cause men to give justification for their wrong actions.

These were all the responses I could get. I appreciate the sincerity of those who responded. So it is glaring that the so called hormonal bombardment is not to be blamed at all in regards to sensuality but what the mind is fed with.

I was privileged to have a chat with an elderly man who told me of life in their time. He said even when he was about the age of seventeen, he still went to school with only his shirt. No shorts and no boxers. He said this meant nothing to anyone both male and female. This was because they had no access to mind polluting informations. A young man going about with just shirt did not instigate any idea to anyone because the minds of people were relatively pure and free from pollution. They also had hormones, but the great disparity between people of that time and people nowadays is not hormones but the access to mind polluting information.

Certainly, when we refuse to heed simple instructions to abstain from things that pollute the mind, and parents refusing to monitor their children, preferring to pursue money, we are sure to look for excuses for our woes. Parents think they can buy a future for their kids not knowing that a good future is built and not bought. Now when we talk of mind polluting things, we think of explicit materials, probably that which is banned from being aired by any media agency, not knowing that there are subtle evil materials that are evil than the explicit ones. Take a look at the celebrities that are shown on the mainstream media.

How godly are they? Are they not suggestive? Look at the music videos shown on television. Listen to the lyrics of the music played on radio. Listen to what is even played in some of the events organised by Christian families, whether wedding receptions, birthdays, etc. Look at the cartoons that kids watch. Some amidst them are suggestive too. These things corrupt the mind. Some would ask, but what is wrong in these things? But these are the very things that draw men away and entices them. When, by these things, we fail woefully because of carelessness, love of the world, and outright contempt for the ways of God, we are surely going to need an excuse for our woes, and the Devil has suggested one for us. "It is your nature to be that way."
It is time to wake up. I'll expect us to banish the defilements of the world from our homes. I'll expect parents to be active in shaping the mind of their children, protecting it from evil. Whether it means forming an active group of parents to checkmate societal moral decadence which will actively ensure that our media don't disseminate informations that are capable of polluting the minds of the young, help the younger ones in judging what information is good to consume or not, for foolishness dwells in the mind of a child. They can also see to doing any other thing at all to help these leaders of tomorrow.

The argument of the hormonal bombardment is that hormones are responsible for the sensuality amidst young people. By extension, they argue that people are this way by nature. By further extension also, they argue that God made them that way. James 1:13-14 clearly debunks this claim. It tells us that a man is first drawn away of his own lusts. That is the lust of his own making or tolerance. Being drawn away suggests going away from the understanding that God has put in every man. The first chapter of the epistle to the Romans makes it clear that all men have the innate knowledge of God contrary to the claim of these sophists that what is innate is lust. But when he becomes careless and lack the will to retain the knowledge of God, he exposes himself to the defilements of this world. This in turn entices him. Nature is not to blame. Our carelessness is to blame. "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." (Ecclesiastes 7:29). Therefore your hormones are holy by nature.

In places like America and other western countries, the homosexuals argue that they are, by nature, attracted to people of the same sex. In other words, God made them that way. This is one of the foundations of its being seen as a human

right, as foolish as the argument is. This argument about hormonal bombardment is a mild version of the same argument. For everything that is allegedly to be by nature is said to be caused of God.

Let's not allow ourselves to be deceived by these sophistry and cling to our Bibles in simplicity of mind. If ever you find yourself being drawn away into lusts, don't think it is natural. The devil is at work. Resist the Devil and he will flee from you. Flee the lust of the flesh. Repent of it. Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

Thank you for making time to read. God bless you.

PIETY, CIRCUMSPECTION, AND INNOCENCE

by the Word

Posted on August 15, 2016, in this article I wrote on a neglected aspect of modern day Christian life. A very important aspect of this article is that which talks about the importance of maintaining a life of innocence.

"I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil."

(Romans 16:19)

Piety and Circumspection

"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise."

(Ephesians 5:15).

I wish to write on this most neglected aspect of modern day Christian life and teaching called "piety." Piety is a state of life in which one is deeply religious. This has a lot of connotations. In the Christian perspective, we know that piety is void of pretence. It is the true state of one's life in which he has deep reverence for God and the fear of God, and these are not without an outward reflection. Being pious, as a Christian, entails holding the word of God in high esteem and fearing him deeply. It means being circumspect. Being circumspect means not taking risks or taking chances. It means you keep as far off as possible from what is perceived to be immoral according to biblical standards. It doesn't have to be outrightly wrong nor does it have to be clearly spoken against in scriptures.

The pious man would not go near what is even perceived as tending to be evil. This of course may be misinterpreted as being superstitious or exaggerating things out of proportion. Piety means minding each and every action we take, thought we think, places we go, associations we keep, information we imbibe, how we relate with others, etc and ensuring that they are according to God's perfect will. And this is the life we are called to live as Christians when the Bible says, "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise." (Ephesians 5:15).

The Extent Of Being Circumspect

"And in all things that I have said unto you be circumspect."

(Exodus 23:13)

To what extent are we supposed to be circumspect? The above text says that we are to be circumspect in ALL things that God has commanded us to do. So far God has commanded it, we must be circumspect about it.
The Bible's commandments touch almost every part of our lives and for this reason we are to be circumspect in almost everything we do. I know there are areas of our lives that we have no commandment from God, for example, whether we should take a cup of water before a meal or whether it should be after. But in almost every other thing we have a commandment from God. So in all these things of which we have a commandment, we must be circumspect.

Innocence

"I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil."

(Romans 16:19)

Paul said plainly, "I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil." (Romans 16:19). What does it mean to be simple? To be simple means to be void of understanding. All through the book of proverbs we

see the simple being disapprovingly spoken of as ignorant and is always likened to a fool. "A foolish woman is clamorous: she is simple, and knoweth nothing." (Proverbs 9:13). "The simple inherit folly..." (Proverbs 14:18). So, quite funnily, the Bible advocates a form of ignorance here. This is the true blissful ignorance. This form of simplicity is an integral part of the pious Christian life and must be sought after both as individuals and collectively by the Christian brotherhood. It is sad that many amidst us are entirely the other way round. They are simple and very gullible concerning what is good, and very wise and rich in knowledge concerning what is evil. But we must strive to be innocent in respect to what is evil.

There is a difference between being virtuous and being simple. While being virtuous is choosing to do the right despite the knowledge of the evil and the supposed benefit of doing it, being simple is when you are ignorant of a thing. So the pious Christian life we ought to strive to attain to as prescribed by scriptures is not a pious life where we would always choose not to lie when the temptation arises, but rather we shouldn't even know how to tell the lie. Not only should we not fornicate, but we shouldn't even know about it, or how to go about it, nor should it come to mind. We should be simple in respect to evil.

In the absence of innocence, being virtuous is the only alternative to help in living a holy Christian life. We must know however that living a godly Christian life based on virtue requires painful struggle and discipline. The blissful ignorance of the innocent would make living a godly Christian life easier on our part. So we should understand that virtue is only a remedial element of the pious Christian life when innocence is lost. But the Lord delights in the simple. It is written, "The LORD preserveth the simple." (Psalm 116:6).

Re-Innocencialising

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."
(2 Corinthians 7:1)

Forgive my use of this foreign word. Not only would you not find it in your

English dictionary, you'd also probably not find it in the dictionary of any other language spoken under the sun. But here is what I mean, it is possible after being conversant with all the evil inventions there are in sinning against God, one can still restore and return to his state of innocence. The process of restoring this innocence is what I refer to as "re-innocencialising."

If per adventure one loses his innocence whether by chance or by choice, he ought to strive to gain back that innocence. This ought to be done by both individuals and as a body of the brotherhood of saints. The Bible makes it clear to us that this is possible. The Bible says, "put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." (Ephesians 4:21 - 24). Despite being corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, the Bible still says that these can be put off and that the spirit of our minds can be renewed. So we can be re-innocencialised. This is also our calling, if in any way, by the information we've consumed, we have corrupted our minds, to renew the spirits of our mind and put on the new man, "which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

People often assume that when people lose their innocence, they should just go on in it struggling with it. But we now know that there is cleansing of the mind and renewing of spirit with the Lord, through his blood.

We shouldn't in the process of trying to help people cope in a world with many prevalent evils teach people what is evil. We must go about this business with the wisdom of trying to maintain the innocence in the innocent and restore innocent to those in need of it. In teaching young ones how to cope in this fallen world, we could just teach them judgment.

People argue, if you don't teach young ones about the sinful inventions of the world in a godly setting, they'd learn it in a worldly setting which is more dangerous for them. The truth however is that both settings are equally dangerous and none is helpful if it would go about informing people of the sinful inventions of the world.

As a person willing to help the young in the right path, you don't have to inform

him on the invented methods of sinning against God, but you just have to teach him judgment. Knowledge is having an information about something, understanding is knowing the essence and the implications of this information, wisdom is the right application of knowledge, and judgment is the simple ability to arrive at a right and final conclusion about something in regards to good and evil, right or wrong. It is this judgment that we need.

How can we get judgment? The psalmist wrote plainly, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word." (Psalm 119:9). He also went on to say, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." (Psalm 119:11). The word is all that the young need to stay pure. If truly we desire to help them, we must hand over the word of God to them in our teachings and leave it at that. We needn't delve into all the dirty things done in the world under the pretext of analysing their evil impact in our lives.

We therefore must be cautious that we don't, because of a prevalent evil, assume that there is no harm in speaking openly about them, but we must apply wisdom first in preserving the innocence in the innocent and restoring innocence in those who, by one way or the other, may have lost it.

Summary

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man."

(Ecclesiastes 12:13)

Now, the summary of it all is, we have a calling to live a pious and circumspect life. We must strive as individuals and as a body to maintain piety in our individual selves and as a body in Christ. The Bible admonishes to live a life of innocence. A life void of the knowledge of evil. We shouldn't in the process of trying to help people cope in a world with many prevalent evils teach people what is evil. We must go about this business with the wisdom of trying to maintain the innocence in the innocent and restore innocent to those in need of it.

"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:7). It should also be our sincere prayer that God should maintain innocence in our hearts and minds.

Thank you for making out time to read this article. I pray that God will help us to be pious, circumspect and innocent in the dear name of our Lord Jesus. Amen. God bless you.

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